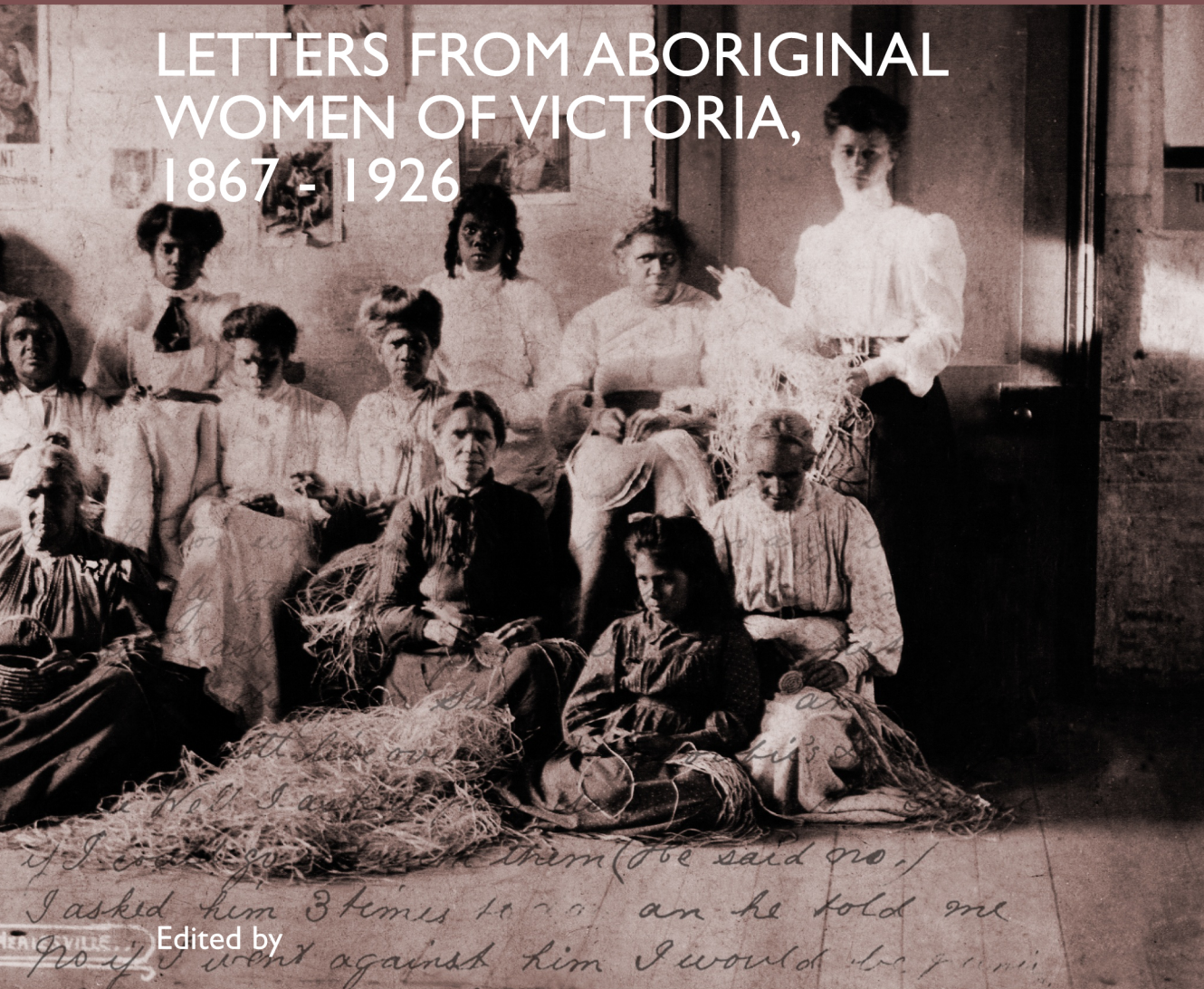


BOARD
FOR THE PROTECTION OF
ABORIGINES

KILL JUN 18 191
531

Mission Station

LETTERS FROM ABORIGINAL WOMEN OF VICTORIA, 1867 - 1926



Edited by

Elizabeth Nelson, Sandra Smith and Patricia Grimshaw

prisoner here on the station because Braggin
Scott spoke up for his rights when the members
of the Board had a meeting in the school.
He Mr Greens is very hard an spiteful I feel as
if I could run away out of his sight. Spiting me
as if I spoke up in the school. I think he worse
with his treatment dare any body say a wrong word
Woe to him or her. He wont even let Sarah an
I went against him I c

LETTERS FROM ABORIGINAL
WOMEN OF VICTORIA,
1867 - 1926

LETTERS FROM ABORIGINAL WOMEN OF VICTORIA, 1867 - 1926

Edited by

Elizabeth Nelson, Sandra Smith and
Patricia Grimshaw



History Department
The University of Melbourne
2002

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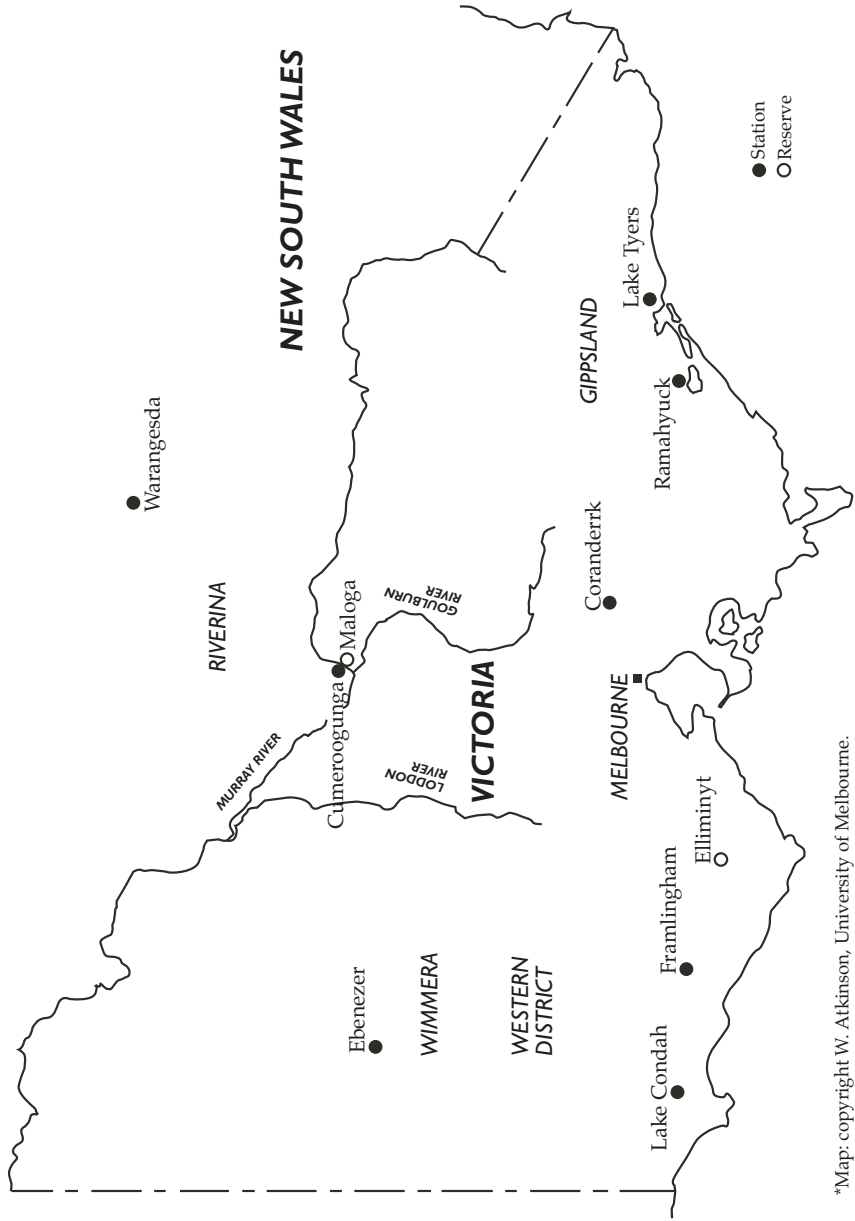
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In order to publish the letters we have followed the procedure set out by Australian copyright law. We placed a notice of our intention to publish, including the names of all the letter writers, in the Commonwealth of Australia *Gazette*, B13 April 2001. Sandra Smith then sought permission from those descendants of the letter writers whom she was able to locate. We are very grateful to the following people who kindly gave their permission for us to publish their forbears letters: Eileen Alberts, Laura Bell, Ivan Couzens, Elizabeth Clarke, Maisie Clarke, Michael Harding, Jessie Hunter, Dawn Lee, Judy Monk, Kevin Murray, Dot Peters, and Carl Turner.

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Reserve Locations in Victoria



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INTRODUCTION

In the early 1930s, an Aboriginal woman, Annie Alberts, wrote to the manager of Lake Tyers station, asking him whether she and her husband would be allowed to return to live in the Lake Tyers community. From her mission childhood – she was born on Ebenezer mission in 1885 – Annie had suffered serious obstacles and disappointments in her search for a decent and dignified life in an alien settler community. She had found scant concern for her own and her family's expressed wishes about their lives and well-being among white officials, missionaries, governments and churches. She ended her letter with words that appear poignant and disturbing to the eyes of readers in the early twenty-first century: 'every dog has its days' she wrote; 'some day the public will take it up and treat us better so answer this letter'.¹

Many other Aboriginal women like Annie Alberts who were educated on the Victorian mission stations and who asserted their civil rights and economic entitlements in this period met the same hostile response. Like her, they had every reason to voice deep discontent with the treatment they themselves, their families and their communities had faced on the missions and reserves over the previous decades. In Victoria the humanitarian goals of the original Christian 'civilising mission', with its already sharp tension between notions of 'uplift' and 'equality', had deteriorated to the point where missions were now bent on keeping inmates inside and others out. An agenda that evangelicals in Britain had begun with hopefulness in the late 1830s and that colonial governments first implemented in Victoria in the 1850s and 1860s, had by 1930 deteriorated into a travesty of Christian humanitarianism.²

The letter writers in this collection had a shared experience of mission regimes. The Lake Tyers station on which Annie Alberts lived was by 1930 the only official Aboriginal reserve that remained of some eight that the Victorian Government had initially established across the colony. The principal stations had been Ramahyuck and Lake Tyers in East Gippsland, Ebenezer in the north west, Lake Condah and Framlingham in the Western District, and Coranderrk north of Melbourne. Each of the stations was overseen by a government-appointed manager or church-appointed missionary.³ Framlingham and Coranderrk were government stations, Ramahyuck and Ebenezer were funded by the Victorian Presbyterian Church which supported missionaries from the related German Moravian Church, and the Anglican Church of Victoria funded the missionaries at Lake Tyers and Lake Condah.⁴

The Victorian mission stations were constituted on a basis different from the mission ventures that had preceded them in the Pacific islands, in New Zealand, and in New South Wales including the Port Phillip District (later Victoria) itself. By the turn of the century they bordered on prison institutions, where missionaries and managers appeared not to be their protagonists but their jailers. Religious and secular staff had acquired a capacity for surveillance, coercion and punishment for which some other Protestant missionaries of the Pacific region might at times have secretly yearned but few outside of Australia ever realized. This situation came about because of an unprecedented congruence of local church missionary goals and state agendas that occurred specifically first in Victoria. How this came about needs explanation.

The imperial 'civilising mission' in the antipodes

Evangelicals had moved into the Pacific region from the first expedition of the London Missionary Society in 1797, followed swiftly by missionaries supported by the Church Missionary Society, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. These great mission bodies sent missionaries and mission wives to the Pacific, initially to face responses from indigenous peoples that ranged from lack of interest to outright hostility. Typically missionaries to the Pacific region arrived at islands and harbours already populated by European sailors, whalers, beachcombers and traders, who arrived well ahead of imperial authorities. Missionaries often sustained precarious footholds just when indigenous groups were vying among themselves for preeminence and where resident whites were often hostile to mission activities. Missionaries needed to negotiate with indigenous leaders for roofs over their heads, for food, and for protection from attack. They needed not only the authority of whiteness derived from possession of intriguing material artifacts and novel skills, but personal attributes that enabled them to negotiate with chiefs first for survival and next for acceptance of western religion and education. The imprimatur of British imperial and colonial regimes came later if it came at all. Both before this and afterwards indigenous peoples in no way treated with missionaries from a position of dependence. Their lives in the community were separate from the missions even where missionaries, colonial officials and new indigenous political leaders were in strong partnership. Indigenous Christian converts or pupils did not commonly live with missionaries, or come under their personal command, but engaged with them at a personal distance as individuals or members of communities.⁵

Nineteenth-century missionaries worked within the framework of evangelical convictions that constituted a double-edged agenda. Evangelicals believed that indigenous peoples were of equal value in

the eyes of God as were any other human beings, that their lives were of infinite significance and that they deserved full human rights. Missionaries also believed that indigenous peoples would attain their full humanity only when they abandoned their religion and culture and adopted Western forms: in other words, when they replicated their mentors' ways. In the context of rampant imperial racism evangelicals' humane voices were important well above their actual numbers. Their zeal to transform their proteges with all the intensity and drive they could muster, however, was always problematic and could in particular circumstances sow the seeds of negative and destructive outcomes. As the biographer of the New Zealand missionary Henry Williams wrote of his subject, 'with single-minded purpose he strode through life so sure of his own destiny that he could see any opposition to it only as weakness or sin'.⁶ The Australian colonies provided the circumstances for the exercise of such inherent authoritarian impulses.

In the colony of New South Wales and its Port Phillip District it was the evangelicals' fellow whites who in the first instance presented the most serious challenge to the establishment of missions, but in the long run it was the entire relationship of mission and state that situated the missions differently. Missionaries did not arrive in Australian ports to negotiate in an undefended way with Aborigines. New South Wales itself was established as a gaol, backed by military from the British army. In the first decades of the nineteenth century mission stations, situated initially in advance of white frontiers, were swiftly engulfed by colonists avid for large pastoral leases. Colonists killed Aborigines who opposed their invasion, and brought disease and destruction to the small bands who ultimately could not halt determined men with guns and horses. Despite the presence of the army, neither soldiers nor white policing and judicial systems could – or would – defend Aborigines. Missionaries found themselves surrounded by settlers hostile and aggressive to Aboriginal people, and faced the near impossible task – given their poor funding – of providing food and shelter for Aborigines, an essential basis if they hoped to influence their potential converts who were now decimated and dislocated.⁷ No sooner had he learned the language of his flock and translated some books of the Bible, complained the missionary Lancelot Threlkeld, who had previously served in Tahiti, than all the speakers of the dialect were dead.⁸

Evangelicals in Britain heard with horror of such events. A Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1837 reiterated what its pious members saw as the duty of the British to indigenous peoples in its fast growing empire. It was Britain's responsibility, they wrote, 'to carry civilization and humanity, peace and government, and, above all, the knowledge of the true God', to the 'untutored and defenceless savage' who so often to date had suffered much from invading colonisers. Indigenous peoples of every land should have the opportunity to share 'that civilization, that innocent commerce, that knowledge and faith

with which it has pleased a gracious Providence to bless our own country'.⁹ They advised, among other concerns, the immediate appointment of Protectors of the Aborigines in the settlement of the Port Phillip District.

The men whom the British government appointed as Protectors once again proved powerless, given the lack of resources at their command, not to say their varying commitment to their task, to control settler atrocities. The same vicious grab for land was repeated in the rush to the goldfields in the 1850s. Lieutenant-Governor Charles La Trobe's initiative in inviting trained German Moravian missionaries to the newly formed Colony of Victoria also at first proved of little use.¹⁰ With the Victorian indigenous population reduced from six or seven thousand in 1836 to a few hundred in the mid 1850s, humanitarian voices became concerned about the fate of the survivors. A commission appointed by the colonial legislature reported in 1858 that a vigorous effort would have to be made to repair the 'great wrongs' done to the Aborigines in the past.¹¹ With the frontier closed and the surviving Aborigines landless and severely impoverished, a Central Board to Watch over the Interests of Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria commenced operations by encouraging church groups to establish missions on Crown land. Anglican missions at Lake Condah and Lake Tyers, and Moravian-Presbyterian missions at Ebenezer and Ramahyuck eventuated. Government reserves opened at Coranderrk and Framlingham. There was little to distinguish these reserves from the missions since the reserves were often headed by church men, and missions and reserves alike looked to the government for resources. Missionaries oversaw the distribution of rations as they pressed Aborigines to accept western education and ways of living, along with evangelical Protestant beliefs. Their proselytising agenda now operated in a context sharply different from those of their counterparts elsewhere in the Pacific.

The legislation establishing these stations named a very considerable number of regulations that bore upon the residents' freedom of movement, personal autonomy and rights to control their children. Missions and the state now were partners in prescribing the lives that Aborigines had to accept in exchange for personal security from assault and a regular, if meagre, subsistence. From the start, therefore, the mission stations set up in the 1860s were the places where Aborigines were forced to look for secure means of living, shelter, clothes and food. They had no land left under their own control, their usual means of living had gone with their land, and the alternative of sporadic or seasonal wage labour offered a poor basis for feeding themselves and their families. Learning about the missionaries' Christ and access to reading and writing came only with the decision to abandon personal independence. This situation only worsened with the establishment in 1869 of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines (BPA).

As its name suggests, the BPA was established as a body to 'protect' Aboriginal people in Victoria. Although this protection entailed preventing Aborigines' starvation and subjection to white violence, the Board's role was also very much one of control. From 1869 until its dissolution in 1957, the BPA administered colonial and state legislation concerning Aboriginal people. It was responsible for providing Aborigines with minimal rations, clothing, housing and education. The Aborigines were expected to work for these provisions; only occasionally did they receive wages from the government. The Board was empowered to make important decisions affecting the lives of Aborigines, regardless of individuals' consent. It assumed the right to control their movement, their place of residence, their outside labour and wages, and in certain circumstances guardianship of their children.¹² As the nineteenth century proceeded, 'protection' came to mean increasingly authoritarian measures and punitive action against those Aborigines who pushed the boundaries of official authority.

The first mission encounters

The missionaries' power did not come all at once, but was a contested process. Aborigines became slowly but inexorably, decade by decade, subject to increasingly draconian regimes in which their most basic human rights were constantly at risk. The exercise of the powers that missionaries acquired under this colonised regime was constrained by one chief obstacle: the resistance of indigenous people themselves. In a context where missionaries were presumed to be engaged in a humanitarian endeavour, wished to be admired and loved and seen to be so, and craved to be in good standing in ecclesiastical circles, their Christian flock on the missions held a few cards in the power game that the missionaries mostly dominated but could not entirely control.

Many of the women who wrote the letters in this collection were the first generation of Aboriginal girls in Victoria to receive primary education from mission wives or assistants and teachers appointed by the Education Department on the government reserves. Matters appeared to start well in mission terms with the children's educational progress. In 1871 the school at Ramahyuck was classified No. 1088, with the Reverend Carl Kramer as head teacher. In 1873 the Inspector of Schools for the Education Department reported that the school had again performed in an excellent fashion in the annual examination. 'This is the first case since the present result system has been enforced that 100% of marks has been gained by any school in the colony. The children, moreover, show not only accuracy in their work, but also exhibit much intelligence – excellent progress is shown.'¹³

In their first years of operation, then, the missionaries distanced themselves from the virulent racism of settlers, and stressed the common humanity of Aborigines exemplified in their 'progress' in religion and education. While patronising and ignorant of the value of

the indigenous culture that they so single-mindedly set out to suppress, mission reports nevertheless constituted most of the positive public statements about Aborigines to be heard in the colony. They set out to challenge appalling characterisations of Aborigines as less than human with their own counter-attack. In the mid 1870s, for example, the Reverend Stähle noted Aboriginal children's excellent progress in school, and the adults' genuine interest in reading. There were fifteen women attending Sunday school, he reported, who were so diligent in learning scripture that they committed a text to heart each day; they got their children to teach them. The women and the men grew in religious knowledge, changing 'more and more for the better in manner, conduct, cleanliness, peacefulness, and diligence'. Where many had proclaimed the incapacity of Aborigines to learn, the Anglican missionaries from Lake Condah and Lake Tyers declared that 'the faults of past failures have been with the teachers rather than with those taught...the Aborigines at the Condah Mission Station form a little Christian community which would compare favourably with most villages in the old world...'¹⁴ The Reverend Friedrich Hagenauer's report to the BPA in 1879 declared: 'The work of training and educating the young has been well carried on...and the best results can be expected in future years, when these children grow up into men and women.'¹⁵

But it was the Reverend John Bulmer who pinpointed a major underlying difference of perception between the missionaries and their proteges. The first generation mission Aborigines simply did not think they ought to be under control. 'They take all that is given them as their due as we have got their country and they get what is given as rent'. Further: 'All this makes it difficult to deal with them, and I must say that most of my troubles have come from this source; we ought to control them'.¹⁶ And the upcoming new generation was proving even harder to convince than their parents. The more educated Aborigines became, it seemed, the more effectively they resisted white missionary dominance. Joseph Shaw, the manager of Coranderrk, urged the Board in June 1888 to issue written regulations: 'When the natives were less enlightened there was little or no need of regulations, as they never thought of calling in question the authority of a manager; but now they are ready enough to do so'.¹⁷ Wrote Bulmer: 'the young people when they get a fair education mix with fast and sporting characters, which does not tend to improvement. Their powers of writing they too often use to write most mischievous letters. I have seen the whole camp in a ferment when such a letter has been received from a member of the community who has been away...' Worse incidents were occurring: 'Many of them have a high estimate of their own importance. One woman who thought she was injured by not being allowed a railway pass writes to the Governor on the subject, and another interviews a member of Parliament...'¹⁸

Despite initial prevailing mission optimism, therefore, problems loomed. A sentence in Hagenauer's report of 1875 from Ramahyuck mission is chilling in the light of future events. Hearing a rumour about imminent government changes in the management of the stations, and obviously alarmed that missionaries' performances had been found wanting, he pointed out that the missionaries' personal labours were not costing the state one penny. As for progress, he wrote defensively: 'That the blacks having been treated as free British subjects, the above results have been all that could be attained under the manifold difficulties which were in the way first'.¹⁹ The tension would escalate as the missionaries' obligation as humanitarians to treat Aborigines, technically British subjects, with due dignity and respect conflicted with their other obligation, to produce swift results in their civilising agenda before settlers' charity ran out; missionaries served two masters, church and state.

Hagenauer's and other missionaries' concerns about Aborigines' status as British subjects diminished as the century advanced and in ways ominous in particular for the capacity of Aborigines to nurture their young. Given that the 1869 Act establishing the BPA gave colonial officials the right to dictate where Aborigines lived, missionaries gradually exerted greater power, when faced with Aboriginal resistance to their dominance. Mechanisms of punishment were two-fold: withholding the offenders' food rations, and assuming the care of their children. Two examples will suffice. In December 1876 the Reverend Carl Kramer at Ebenezer mission reported that after a quarrel a woman named Esther had left the mission taking her three children, one of whom was of school-age and another nearly so. 'I am of the opinion', he declared, 'that it is most desirable that the parents should be restrained from acting as this woman has done and that, when leaving the station, they should, at least, not interrupt the education of the children by taking them away from school'. He wanted the Board to back him up, 'either by compelling the woman to bring the children back to this station or by removing them to [school at] Coranderrk. I think, if something is not done that would be establishing a very undesirable precedent'.²⁰

Again, at Ramahyuck in 1878 several Aboriginal men complained to the Board about poor treatment. Hagenauer, angrily describing their letter as 'slander and untruthfulness', sought effective ways to punish the ringleaders, James Brindle and Charley Foster. In a letter to the Board's Secretary he wrote that Foster 'is of no account but is led astray by his wife Norah one of the worst women here'. As a punishment he recommended that Charley and Norah Foster be dismissed from the station for six months (hence losing their provisions) and that all the children of Emily Brindle and Norah Foster over three years of age 'be taken to an orphanage or otherwise as the Board directed'.²¹

The 1886 'Half-Caste' Act and its outcomes

The long-term aim of mission education was to see Aborigines assimilated into white settler society. Friedrich Hagenauer saw many already trained for this but they would need pressure to leave their extended kin networks. Hagenauer was one of the missionaries whose advice fed into new legislation in the 1880s that aimed to force younger, educated Aborigines to move away from the missions. An Act in 1886 declared that any person of mixed Aboriginal and European descent over the age of 15 and under the age of 35 had forthwith to leave the missions. Adolescents of mixed descent were to be apprenticed out, or put into domestic service. But the Board could also utilise its powers to remove any orphan, or child considered to be neglected, to an industrial school or orphanage. In 1899 an even more intrusive regulation enabled authorities to remove any Aboriginal child from its parents if the Governor declared it was for 'better' care and education.²² Within a year the Board had increased its reach yet again by declaring that all children of mixed descent would be sent away at the age of twelve. The Reverend Stähle's report to the Board for 1900 stated: 'As the blacks are dying out, and the Board removes the half-caste boys and girls by handing them over to the Industrial Schools Department, finality is greatly facilitated, and will, doubtless, be attained within a few years.'²³

Stähle and the other exponents of 'the civilising mission' now faced a considerable challenge given that Aborigines were now administratively defined as either 'full-blood' or 'half-caste'. They were obliged to restrain the former on stations, and the latter at a distance. So-called 'half-castes' were to be denied any right off or on the stations to houses, land, or rations. Given the scarcity of employment available in rural Victoria, and the prevalence of racist social exclusion, to leave the station was a recipe for disastrous poverty.²⁴ If Aborigines stayed, they faced humiliating controls on their personal freedom and the prospects of losing all their children from the age of twelve. It was clear that in the case especially of young Aboriginal girls, there was no intention that they should see their families often, or indeed at all. The Board discouraged the marriages of girls of mixed descent with Aborigines of full descent; if they were prevented from spending time with their families, and married white men, the 'problem' of Aborigines would soon diminish.²⁵ All Aborigines suffered beyond measure from these cruel choices and women were alongside men in combating their effects.

The manner in which power on the mission stations was constituted by the turn of the century left Aboriginal women struggling to assert their human rights. They stood valiantly whether in the face of white authority on stations or exerting pressure for land or for rations if they left with their families to live outside. Stähle in 1888 showed he recognised the paradox of their situation but also acknowledged the

irony of the missionaries' position. Missionaries, he wrote, had been charged with the task of encouraging Aborigines to lead a settled life, and now their hard work was being undone before their eyes:

since...the children of these Aborigines are forced to leave the station by Act of Parliament, while the few remaining blacks are to be prevented from marrying after their own choice, they have lost all confidence, and are determined to leave the station and earn a living for themselves and their families in the best way they can, rather than part with their girls and have no prospect that they should be able to marry among their own people and settle down on the station, which they have always looked upon as their home. When one considers that grave doubts were entertained about the Aborigines ever settling down to a civilized life, and the trouble the missionaries had to train them to do so, it seems all the more deplorable that, after this has been successfully accomplished, they should ever be caused through any means to take again to the wandering life, with its consequent vices and hardships.²⁶

The 1902 Commonwealth Franchise Act removed in effect if not strictly in law such political rights as the Aborigines ever possessed.²⁷ The 'civilising mission' begun in the 1830s had ended with Aborigines driven to a bare survival, without resources and with minimal training, in a hostile settler community, or a life of surveillance and regulation on reserves and stations. From the late-nineteenth century the government's pursuit of the dispersal policy resulted in most of the mission stations being shut down. During the first two decades of the twentieth century the Board attempted to concentrate the Victorian Aborigines on one station, Lake Tyers, although the letters make clear that very frequently mission residents stayed in the area of their former homes even if government support was withdrawn. Framlingham, for example, sustained a community although only a handful of residents received continuing support.

The choices Annie Alberts and her Aboriginal mission sisters faced involved them in situations where, in a country boasting a strident attachment to democracy and egalitarianism, neither choice they made offered the liberty, freedom and justice promised at the outset by their Christian teachers. But they and their descendants never gave up the fight.

This collection of letters consists of transcripts of letters written by Aboriginal women between the years 1867 and 1926. The majority of the letters were addressed to the BPA, usually to the Board's Secretary. There are also letters to other members of the Board, the Chief Secretary, missionaries and station managers, local guardians, family members, newspaper editors, police, members of parliament, and the Governor of Victoria. We also list some missionaries' and officials'

responses. Apart from a few letters located in the Chief Secretary's Department files, the letters in this collection are deposited in the BPA's records, held partly by the Public Record Office Victoria and by the National Archives of Australia, Victorian Office. Many letters were undoubtedly lost and never made their way to the Secretary, and because of considerations of space the correspondence here, even so, by no means represents an exhaustive sample of the matters Aboriginal women raised.²⁸

The letters are arranged according to general themes and chronologically within each section according to the date of each woman's first letter. Many of the letters fit into more than one theme but for practical purposes appear in only one section. Although a number of the letter-writers had more than one surname over the course of their lifetime we have listed their letters under one surname only. The biographical section provides information regarding marriages and name changes to help the reader identify the letter-writers. We have left the letters as much as possible in the form that came originally from the pens of the writers but have, however, used ellipses where sections of the letters were repetitive or sensitive, and inserted in brackets additional punctuation where this is useful to facilitate the reader's understanding. We have used the name 'Aborigines' rather than 'Kooris' or 'Koories' in response to the preference currently expressed by local communities in Victoria.

This collection has been a collaborative venture of three historians. Elizabeth Nelson took responsibility for transcribing the letters and then collaborated with Patricia Grimshaw on the structure and introductory passages of the book. Sandra Smith took the lead in tracing families through her close contacts with Aboriginal communities in Victoria and researched the biographical details of the letter writers.

Elizabeth Nelson, Sandra Smith and Patricia Grimshaw
Melbourne, December 2002

NOTES ON EDITORS

Elizabeth Nelson is completing a PhD in the History Department at the University of Melbourne. Her thesis investigates the impact of the First World War on domestic violence in Victoria. She is a co-author of the article 'Empire, the "Civilising Mission" and Indigenous Christian Women in Colonial Victoria', *Australian Feminist Studies* (2001) and of the chapter 'Crime in Carlton', in P. Yule (ed.), *A History of Carlton* (Melbourne University Press, forthcoming 2003).

Sandra Smith is a project officer at the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Centre at Museum Victoria where she is currently Coordinator of the Aboriginal Family History Project. This project works with families to identify, search and encourage them to write up their family histories. She is also working with the Koori Health & Research Unit at the University of Melbourne on a project to identify the issues such as introduced diseases and movement of the people that have contributed to the state of Koori health today.

Patricia Grimshaw is the Max Crawford Professor of History at the University of Melbourne where she teaches American and Australian history and contributes to the Gender Studies programme. She is the author of a number of studies in women's history including *Women's Suffrage in New Zealand* (rev. ed. 1987), *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Hawai'i* (1989) and *Creating a Nation* (1994), co-written with Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly. Her most recent publication is *Women's Rights and Human Rights: International Historical Perspectives* (2001), co-edited with Katie Holmes and Marilyn Lake.

has made matters worse for you. The man said
that he was to be to be on the Aborigines
of the Station when they wanted to go any where they
was to only let him know where they were going. There
to-day I asked him if I could go out fishing
with my daughter Sarah Scott she an her husband
Braggin Scott live over at Mr Dobbie's Lake Tyres
House Well I asked permission from Mr Greene
if I could go out with them (He said no.)
I asked him 3 times to day an he told me
No if I went against him I would be prisoned.
do you think that is right I am to be a
prisoner here on the station because Braggin
Scott spoke up for his rights when the members
of the Board had a meeting in the school.
The Mr Greene is very hard an spiteful I feel as
if I could run away out of his sight. Spiting me
as if I spoke up in the school. I think he worse
with his treatment dare any body say a wrong word
Noe to him or her. He wont even let Sarah an

THE LETTERS:

Children and Family

One of the greatest concerns of the letter writers was the well-being of their children and families. Most of the letters in this section were written with the hope of bringing about the reunion of family members. Many women expressed their love for their children and a sense of responsibility to other relatives. Sometimes they wished to look after orphaned children of relatives or friends; sometimes they wanted to be with family in times of sickness, childbirth, and death, and at times of celebration, such as Christmas.

During the late 1870s and the 1880s women living on mission stations sought the permission of the BPA to visit their relatives, particularly their children, on other stations, or for their relatives to visit them. The Board had the power to grant or refuse such visits, and was often reluctant to allow families and individuals to move from one mission station to another. The Board's decisions often caused the women anxiety and sorrow. In 1883 its refusal to allow Margaret Harrison's children to live with her at Ebenezer had a tragic outcome: Margaret's young daughter Edith died before Margaret had a chance to see her.

The letters from the 1890s onwards reflect the new difficulties faced by mothers after the 1886 Act, when many of their young teenage daughters and sons were forced to leave the missions to obtain work in the white community. Bessie Rawlings, Eliza O'Rourke and Jemima Dunolly were among those women who wrote hoping that their children might be allowed to remain on the stations. Over the decade from 1911 to 1921 the BPA sanctioned the removal of a number of Aboriginal girls to institutions in Melbourne or to other mission stations, where they were forced to remain for several years. The mothers of these girls wrote a series of letters, to the BPA and to other authorities, seeking the return of their daughters. In June 1918 Rose Foster wrote to the BPA about her daughters who had been in the Oakleigh Reformatory for the past year: 'it is almost breaking my heart for the two girls'. In 1921 Maggie Johnson wrote of her daughter Alison, who had not been allowed home for three years: 'I'm worrying myself to death over her'. Lena Austin and Lizzie Jennings, whose daughters had also been removed from their care, wrote letters to their daughters telling them not to worry and explaining that their families were doing all they could to get them home. The girls themselves, such as Lena's daughter Winnie and Lizzie's daughter Elsie, wrote to the BPA requesting to be allowed home.

Alice Murray

*Alice Murray, Birregurra, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
5 January, 1879²⁹*

Please Mr Bedge [Page]

send me a pass as I want to see Pompy at Coronderrich and his mother
very sorry want to see you & hope you will see me down there & his
mother awful sorry for her son[;] tell Grandmother I could not get away
& my sister helen[;] please I am coming down if I can & Mr Bedge
please send me a pass

I remain

yours respectfully

Alice Murray
pompy mother
love to my son
I awfully
anxious
to see
him
Alice Murray

Louisa Briggs

*Louisa Briggs, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
25 August, 1879³⁰*

Dear Sir,

Please Mr Page will you be so kind enough to send a pass
for me to go down to see my Daughter as you promised that I could go
down to be with her at her confinement, please could you send me up
some money for to pay the coach affair and to buy a pair of boots and
stocking and a hat[.] I want some boots for the children[;] they are
nearly barefooted[.] I sent down once before but I never got an answer
but if you would send them up I would be very thankful[.] My
daughter wrote up twice for me to go down at the end of this month
My daughter told Mr Rev Strickland to write down for a pass

So I must conclude with my best regards to you,

No more

So good bye

Your ever

dearest Friend

Mrs Louisa Briggs

Write soon

*Carl Kramer, missionary, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
5 September, 1879³¹*

Mrs. Kramer desires me to mention that Mrs. Briggs works hard, only that she is too indulgent with her children.

In July 1883 when Louisa's daughter Sarah Barkley and her husband were about to leave Coranderk for Tatura, Louisa wanted them to bring her other daughters Polly and Caroline up to Ebenezer on their way. Mr Goodall, manager of Coranderk, wrote to Captain Page that 'this I strongly object to[.] They would be much better in the dormitory under the supervision of Miss Persse than roaming about the country especially at their age'.³²

Sarah Dawson

*Sarah Dawson, Framlingham, to Mr Ramsay, Chief Secretary,
16 May, 1880³³*

Dear Sir

I want to know if you could do me a favour by laying this matter before the Cheif Secretary[.] I have three little orphan cousins at Lake Condah: they do not get well treated so I would like to have them up here with me were they can be well cared for[.] I hope sir you will give this matter your best consideration because the last time I went down to see them I found them in a fearful state running about bare headed and ragedy as they have nobody to care for them[;] they have no relation there[;] this matter also was laid before Mr William Anderson by Thomas Livingstone

Allow me to remain

Dear Sir

Your most obedient servant

Sarah Dawson

The Chief Secretary's office forwarded Sarah's letter to the BPA and Captain Page asked the missionary at Lake Condah, Rev. Stähle, to report on the state of the three Green children: Isaac, Elizabeth and John. Stähle replied that the children were well cared for and did not want to leave Lake Condah, and also that their father had given them into Stähle's charge when on his deathbed. Mr Cecil Cooke JP also reported that he had investigated the children's state of wellbeing and that he found them healthy and happy. The Board refused Sarah's request.

Emily Hall

*Emily Hall, Maloga, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, June, 1883*³⁴

Sir, In writing these few lines to you hope it find you in good health as it leave me at present. And plesant send me a pass for me to go to Coranderrk[.] I was longing to go there and could not get a pass, I heard about Caroline that she hurted and she is going to the hospital and wish to go down to see the childern, no more to say to you so good by. I remain your loving friend Emily Hall.

Caroline Morgan

*Report of BPA meeting: Daily Telegraph, 6 September, 1883*³⁵

Two Aborigines, Morgan and Sambo, had been brought up, on warrant, at Healesville, charged with neglecting their wives and families. The latter had been discharged, but Morgan was remanded for a month, to afford him the opportunity of getting some employment. It was determined to ask the sanction of the Chief Secretary to Morgan's being refused admission to Coranderrk.

*Caroline Morgan, Maloga, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
23 February, 1886*³⁶

Dear Sir, I am very thankful for you letting me know about my husband. I was just waiting to here any news about him. I am sorry to here that he has thrown himself into such trouble in the way he has done. I dont know what's ever he is thinking off too forsake his wife and children.

We parted in good terms also expecting for him to return[.] He wernt down to see his friends who was longing to see him[;] And on the way back home it seem that he fell into a snare[.] It seems that whenever he goes away from home his away in some trouble & since we left Coranderrk we never fell out or said any angry words to him since he been home with me. also I done what's a womans duty to do to her husband. It seems whenever he goes away hes always mixed up with some bad company[;] also forgets about his home wife and children[.] I brought him from Coranderrk to try him if he would improved or do better on Maloga but its just the same or a little worst. He thinks because I brought him away from his friends & relations and it seems that it hardens his heart against me & the children[;] And he thinks that if I wont let him go back to live with his people.

That's all I have to say about him at present and dear sir excuse my bad and hasty letter the mail will soon be going I am anxious to send this time

I am your sincerely friend Caroline Morgan[.] Answer Soon.

Please Sir I'll ask you would you be kind enough to send me a pass for me & my 5 children the eldest one his 11 years old & the second eldest one is 10 years & the 3rd eldest 6 and the twins are 4 years of age. And if your be kindly to send me a pass you will oblige your servant Caroline Morgan[.] I would like to come back to my old home Coranderrk if you have no objections and please is there a house for me to go in when I come up. & when you send a pass up let it be up to the 2nd of March.

Margaret Harrison

Margaret married Captain Harrison in June 1883. In this letter she still signed herself Margaret Green.

*Margaret Green, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
9 September, 1883³⁷*

Dear Sir

I write these few lines asking a favour of you if you would kindly let me have my children who are at Condah, since I came here I got married and I have made this my home[.] I do not think that I ever will go back to Lake Condah so I would feel very thankful to you if will let me know about my children

yours very
obedient
Margaret Green

Captain Page referred the request to Rev. Stähle, the missionary at Lake Condah. Stähle reported that in his opinion Margaret Green was a bad mother; one time she had beaten her children and not given them any food. Stähle had taken the children and placed them in the dormitory at Lake Condah where they had lived for several years. He did not think it wise to allow the children to go to their mother at Ebenezer.

*Edith Taylor, Lake Condah, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 15 October,
1883³⁸*

Dear Sir

Mr Stahle told me that my mother has asked you to send us her children up to her to the Wimmera and he asked me also whether we would like to go, but I said no, for I would rather that my mother & little brother would come down to Condah again, than that we would have to go there.

We are all very happy and comfortable here, this is our home and we have all our friends here and everybody is kind to us, so please Sir let us stop here, and tell my mother to come down.

I remain
Yours respectfully
Edith Taylor

*Carl Kramer, missionary, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
22 October, 1883³⁹*

I do not know of any reasons why Margaret Green's children should not be sent to her beyond those given by Mr Stähle. When Margaret was seriously ill some months ago she requested me to write to Mr Stähle and enquire whether he would kindly let the children come up to her which I did. As a reply I received a somewhat lengthy communication from Mr Stähle in which he gave a number of reasons why it was not desirable at all that the children should be interfered with, stating that their father before his death had given them into his care, that they were well looked after where they were, that Margaret had neglected them and would do so again so that we should have to take them from her, that there were some kind friends paying for their support while at Condah who would cease doing so if the children were removed from there etc. etc. Mr Stähle finished by saying that he hoped the matter would end there and so I have not troubled any further. Margaret is married to Captain Harrison of whom we think a great deal but Margaret, I am afraid, does not make a very good wife and if her children are not sent here I fear she will go to Condah again, when Mr Stähle will have the same troubles with her [?] again, for I do not believe that her husband will go with her.

The BPA decided not to allow Margaret to have her children. In early April 1884 one of her daughters, Edith, died at Lake Condah.

*Margaret Harrison, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
9 April, 1884⁴⁰*

Dear Sir

Please would you kindly allow me to have my two girls with me here as one of them died & I have not see her before she died and I should like the other two to be with me to comfort me.

Please do not disapoint me for my heart is breaking to have them with me. Please to send them up here as I shall not leave this station

Please to ask Mr Stahle to let them come

I am yours obedient

Servant

Margaret Harrison

P.S. let me know

*Rev. Stähle, missionary, Lake Condah, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
28 April, 1884⁴¹*

I beg to state that Edith Taylor daughter of Margaret Harrison who was under our special charge in the Dormitory took ill & died after only 24 hours illness before the Doctor, who was at once sent for, arrived...under the present circumstances I do not wish to object to Margaret Harrison getting them.

Margaret's other daughters, Alice and Julia, were returned to her at Ebenezer. Sadly, Julia died not long afterwards, in June 1885, at the age of 11. Alice remained with her mother until 1890 when she was sent by the Board to live at Coranderrk.

Margaret Harrison, Ebenezer, to the Governor of Victoria, 11 April, 1891⁴²

To the Governor

please sir if you can do me kiness[.] I have got a girl send away from the Station up to Correnderrke Station[.] I would like to get her back[.] Sir I am not very strong my self[.] I am very sickly[.] I would like to get her back from that Station and I shall be very thankfull

I am yours
most obedient
servant
Margaret Harrison

Margaret's letter regarding her daughter Alice Taylor was referred to the BPA and the Board asked Rev. Bogisch at Ebenezer to report on the matter. Bogisch reported that he did not believe Alice wanted to return to Ebenezer. The Board thus refused to grant Margaret's request.

Lydia Briggs

*Mrs J. Briggs, St Germain, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
24 January, 1884⁴³*

Dear Sir

I have the pleasure of writing these few lines to ask you if you will be kind as to send me a pass to go down to see the children for two or three weeks. Please sir would you be kind enough to send it up Monday or Tuesday[?] I wouldnt trouble you for a pass only Jack got no work at present not for a while if you give me a pass to take me down Jack will find mony to bring me back[;] you promised me a pass to go and see the children before I left[;] if you send me a pass from Mooropna to Melbourne I will try and manage the other myself.

Kind regards to you from me and husband
no more so goodbye
I remain yours truly
Mrs J Briggs

Lydia Briggs, Maloga, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 19 March, 1885⁴⁴

Dear Sir, I take the pleasure of writing to you hoping that you are in good health as I am at present. I want to know if you could send me a pass please because I want to go and see my Dear Children and Please will you send it up as soon as you can[;] they are longing for me to come home and see them again[.] Please send it the week after this

week[.] Jack is very buisey in putting up some new houses[;] the pass only for me and the children[.] I only want to stay two weeks[.] I would not bother you sir for a pass only that I want to see them. if you send me any pass please [?] send it to March 29

Dear sir would you be kind enough to let me know if you will send it Please [?] send it soon.

I remain yours

Sincere Friend

Lidia Briggs

Soon afterwards Daniel Matthews, the missionary at Maloga, wrote to Captain Page that 'I find now Mrs Briggs is writing to you for a pass – this I think should not be permitted unless she & her husband agree to go back to Coranderrk & settle. In my opinion it is prejudicial to the advancement of any Mission that the Blacks should be permitted to come & go as they please'. However, on 21 April 1885 Daniel Matthews wrote again to the Board, this time seeking permission for Lydia to travel to Coranderrk and commenting that she was well behaved and would leave her children behind at Maloga.⁴⁵

*Lydia Briggs, Maloga, telegram to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 9 May, 1885*⁴⁶

What have you decided about my children[?]

*Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Briggs, Maloga, 11 May, 1885*⁴⁷

Dear Mrs Briggs

The Board decided last Monday that, in pursuance of the powers given them by the Regulation under the Act, your children should remain at Coranderrk for the present. It is for their benefit. When you are settled down & Jack can support them it will be time enough to take them. You cannot permanently reside on a N.S.W. Mission Station[.] It is very kind of Mr Matthews to allow you to settle there at all. I am sure he will tell you what to do, that it is better to leave the children where they are. In case of sickness I will send for you

Good bye

Your friend

AMA Page

Sarah Barkley

*Mrs Barkly, Kyabram East, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 14 March, 1884*⁴⁸

Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure of writing these few lines hoping to find you in good health as it leaves me at present. Please will you be so kind as to send me a pass that I want to go down to Coranderrk to try and get one of my sisters to come up with me to stay because I feel very

lonsome here by my self where I am[.] I don't know anyone here[;] if you send a Pass send it up on Monday or Tuesday so that I can start down on the 20th March[;] if it a pass from Mooroopna to Melbourne will do[.] I will try and manage the other myself from Melbourne to Lilydale[;] if you cant send it on Monday send it on Tuesday or Wednesday as I can get it on Thursday[.]
No more to say at present

I remain yours truly
Mrs Barkly

Mrs Barkley, Tatura, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 21 July, 1884⁴⁹

Dear Sir

I have the pleasure of writing these few lines to ask you if you be kind enough to send me a pass from Tatura to Lilydale. I am sorry I am troubling you so often for a pass only one thing I want to see my Mother and say far well befor I leave[.] We are going over to Western Australian[.] Please send the pass this week[.] I will be much oblige to you for your kindness[.]

Allan got a letter from one of his friend asking him to go over and he will pay our fair over[;] no more so goodbye

I remain yours
Trouly

Mrs Barkley

Ellen Good

Robert Thwaites, manager, Framlingham, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 5 August, 1884⁵⁰

Dear Sir,

Ellen Good told me that on Friday 25th her sister Lizzy Egan of Lake Condah station died in the Hamilton Hospital – I feel very sorry for poor Ellen who feels her bereavement very keenly – she wishes me to write and ask you to allow her only surviving sister Jane Egan of Condah to come up here and live with her. I understand from Ellen that Jane is not at all robust and that she is greatly affected by the death of her sister. It would be a great kindness to both of them if they could be permitted to live together and if you will use your influence with Mr Stahle to gratify their very natural desire you will confer a great favour. In 1893 Ellen and her husband William were successful in their application to the BPA for 80 acres of land from the Framlingham reserve.⁵¹ In February that year the Vice Chairman of the Board, Mr Cameron, visited Framlingham. Cameron reported that 'Mrs W. Good having reported that on calling at Lake Condah for her little nephew L. Young, Mr Stahle refused to give up the child, and after having made full inquiry into the circumstances it seems most desirable that the former resolution of the Board "to give the child to her" should be

carried out and that Mr Stahle be instructed to deliver the same to Mrs Good'.⁵²

*Ellen Good, South Condah, to Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
6 December, 1893*⁵³

Dear Sir

I am writing a few lines to you asking if you would be so kind as to allow a pass to go home. Dear Sir, I would not trouble you if I had any means of my own[;] as I have none and don't know how to get home I would be very thankful to you if you would send me a pass. Please Mr Hagenauer would you allow me a pass also for my brother's children as they are so small and I don't like to leave them at home. These are two girls that needs a mother's care. I don't like going away and leaving them behind and my brother wants me to look after them[;] hoping and trusting that you will please sympathize with me in their trouble. I also thank you very much for what you have done for me in trying to get the money back for me[.] I would like to get home by the end of next week if I could get the pass

I must close
with kind regards
I remain
yours faithfully
Ellen Good

*Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
10 December, 1915*⁵⁴

Dear Sir

Just a line to you[.] I got your letter & I had Mrs Pepper here for a fortnight now & in a week's time her time will be up so you would try & send her a pass as she has no other way to get home. She wants to go home today week so dont fail to send her a pass as my place will be full here by then. And I will have no room & she wants to get home to her children. So Mr Ditchburn I would like you to send her the pass. I think she has benefited by being here[;] so this is all[.] Wishing you compliments of the season

with best wishes hope you will oblige
E. Good

*Ellen Good, Framlingham, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
5 March, 1917*⁵⁵

Dear sir I wont to know if you would put this letter before the board because I wont to no if I could get Winnie and please be sure and put it before the board as I wont to know soon[.] I have the other girls out in good situation and I would like to get Winnie here and have her for myself until she is able enough to do for herself and her mother desires me to take her and she has asked me since I came home to try and get

her so I hope and trust that you will do your best I hope that you will try your best for me to get her[.] so I would be very much oblige to you and the board[.] I remain yours sincerely Ellen Good

Secretary, BPA, to Ellen Good, Framlingham, 14 March, 1917⁵⁶

Memo/

With reference to your letter of the 5th instant, relative to the care of Winnie Austin, I have to inform you that Winnie Austin is thought by the Board to be better at Lake Condah Station.

Emily Egan

*Emily Egan, Lake Condah, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
29 August, 1884⁵⁷*

Dear Sir

I am sorry I was not able to write to you as I promised[.] I am glad to say that Jimmy is a great deal better than ever he was when we were down at the Station. I daresay you have heard that we are living [?] on our own piece of ground, near the M. Station. What I want to write to you is about my father⁵⁸, I really dont know what to do since my dear mothers death, he seems so restless and too fond of drink. Last year he asked to go away shearing, and only sent one pound to Eva and all the rest of his money went to pay the publicans.

It was only the other day he got a bottle and was real drunk though I have never told Mr Stahle about it, I do wish you would be so good as to compell him to settle. It will be the death of him if he is allowed to roam about[.] I have talked to him reason with him but it is of no use, he says he does not care for anybody. Now he is at Framlingham Station to ask Mr Stahle if he can go for a week and he has not come home yet, and he tells of going away again, Please Captain can anything be done to keep him at home[;] there is his garden going to ruins, he doesnt take any trouble to work in it. Jimmy was wishing to see you very much this last time you were down. Jimmy has left Bannams Mills, for it was hard for him to get his money, he will be going to shearing I suppose you have seen our little girls at Framlingham with Mr Good[.] I had to leave them there till we have more room, We are living in a small place, but I hope to have them home soon, Jimmy wished to be kindly remembered to you[.] I would like to hear from you

I am Sir

Yours Truly

Emily Egan

Emma Campbell

*Mrs Campbell, Gamawar, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
7 October, 1884⁵⁹*

Dear Sir,

I am letting you know that the children are all quite well at present[.] I hope you are the same[;] excuse me Sir I ham troubling you for a pass because their is no school about hear for my children[.] Alick as been dispoint me say they was a school about hear but is to far for them to walk[;] if I now that I would never left Coranderrk with my children[;] the country is very hot for my children[;] is a Pitty Alick would not[?] take your advise[;] evening Mr Goodall been baging him very hard to stop[.] I have no more to say

I ham you trulys

Mrs Campbell

Write Soon

Maggie McLellan

*Maggie McLellan, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
7 November, 1885⁶⁰*

Captain Page

Dear Sir

I write these few lines to let you know that Ned and I are quite well. We had a good journey up here & Mr & Mrs Kramer were pleased to see us, but I often think of Coranderrk & hope to take a trip down there after Xmas. There is not much to say, the men are binding the hay[;] they will finish it tomorrow, it would have been finished today only it rained & so put them back.

I don't care much for this place[.] I would rather live in Coranderrk, as all my friends & relations are there. Do you know if Mrs Morgan is yet in the hospital or has she left, my people very seldome write to me.

How are Mr & Mrs Goodall & Miss Purse, I hope quite well. All the people are well, Ned & I send our best respects to you

I remain

Your obedient servant

Maggie McLellan

*Carl Kramer, missionary, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
7 April, 1886⁶¹*

Maggie McLellan told us that she was going to Coranderrk for a visit, to see her friends before they all died. When we remarked that, once with her friends she would not return in a hurry she replied: Well I don't know I might stay 2 or 3 years. We think it quite natural that she should wish to re-visit Coranderrk and see her friends again, but

nonetheless, we deplore her departure from amongst us. She is a nice, pleasant and respectable woman, who tries her very best to keep her husband straight and shall be glad to welcome her back to the station at, we hope, no very distant date.

Bessy Cameron

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Ramahyuck,
6 May, 1891⁶²*

My dear Mrs. Cameron

I duly received your letter of the 4th. instant, asking me to allow your daughter Maggie to come and live at Ramahyuck for a few months etc. I am really very sorry that it is not at all in [my] power to comply with your wish, which I would gladly do if I could. The same applications come constantly from other stations and have to be refused, as the Law is quite stringent on this point. I am sorry for Maggie also, but of course, as she has married, she has to be with her husband and he has to support her under all circumstances. I think it was a pity that you did not let them go to Maneroo when he wanted to go there.

Again I assure you that I would gladly say yes to your wishes, but it cannot be done. I think you should tell Maggie to go with her husband to Orbost so that she may assist him in his work.

With best wishes

Yours faithfully

F.A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Ramahyuck,
9 August, 1892⁶³*

My dear Mrs. Cameron

When I stated to Donald that I had got a railway pass for yourselves and Haines, he replied that under no circumstances would he ever consent to let Haines go on board ship. I asked him again if he would consent, but he clearly declared that he would never consent. I had to therefore...go to Melbourne alone and now let you know this result[?] If I was in your place, I would return home and live with my husband.

With very kind regards

Faithfully Yours

F.A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Bairnsdale,
26 April, 1893⁶⁴*

My dear Bessie

You will have been surprised and perhaps please[d] you saw Donald bringing Haynes to you, but it was absolutely needed for him to leave Ramahyuck. Now in order that you may have time to find employment for him I have arranged that he shall get rations to the

31st June, so that he will not be a burden to you, and I only hope that he will do well.

When I come to Bairnsdale I will call on you. Hoping that you all are doing well, I remain Yours Faithfully, F.A. Hagenauer

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, 29 June, 1893⁶⁵

My dear Mrs Cameron

Donald wished me to send you 15/. by post, which I herewith do. As you have not got a place for Haynes yet I brought the matter before the Board and am happy to be able to inclose you another Order for 4 weeks longer but after that it will cease altogether. Please bring the order at once to Mr Patterson for he has to make up the amount on the 30th or on [the] day you get the order.

Best wishes

yours faithfully

F.A. Hagenauer

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Bairnsdale, 30 July, 1894⁶⁶

My dear Mrs Cameron

I wish to send you a few lines in account of the proposed marriage between your daughter Louise and Willy Login. They have made up their minds to get soon married and, of course lawfully they can do so at any time. Now considering the whole matter, I think it would be very nice if you would not only give your written consent, but that you should, if it is possible, come to the Ramahyuck Marriage on the day...I do not wish to marry them myself against your will, but I understand, that in that case they will go to Sale and get married there. This would cost a deal of money, which they could use better in their new household, and if you would give your consent and come yourself it would make matters very pleasant and I am sure will be the best for Louise as otherwise her child could not be on any[?] station. Donald desires ere long to get some building employment elsewhere, but says that he will not do so before Louise is married – I have carried out my promise and sent her material for a nice and useful wedding dress and only expect your letter to Ramahyuck in reply to this.

I hope your Maggies trouble will be [over?] by this, so that you may be able[?] to

return home. I suppose Louise will have written to you herself on the subject.

With kindest wishes

yours faithfully

F.A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Bairnsdale,
8 August, 1894⁶⁷*

Dear Mrs. Cameron

Your letter of the 2nd instant has duly come to my hands but I [?] fairly must say that it was a very bitter reply to my kind note to you. Well, of course, the [?] of your daughter was carried out for they got married at Sale, but not by me. This money could have been saved if you had not been so selfish in the matter. I hope the young married will live happily and rightly together at all times.

I understand that your old household is now broken up for Donald will have left Ramahyuck with young Macredie to work elsewhere. Of course I feel sorry for so doing, but I am sure I felt long ago it would come to that.

I have now [?] [?] you to inform[?] your daughter Mrs. Bryan to be prepared to receive her little boy Roy to her own home or to send her written consent to have him transferred to the Industrial Schools at an early date, because his certificate to live at Ramahyuck cannot be renewed in future.

I am really glad to observe that your daughter has safely come through her trouble and wish her much blessing[?] for the little one – I hope I hear here at the Office about Maggie's decision about Roy by return of post, for he now must leave Ramahyuck.

Your son Haines has returned to Melbourne and is discharged; as he has already cost so much to the Board he cannot get any more and must earn his living. I have asked him to go by steamer or any boat to join you at Bairnsdale and I hope you will find work for him or go perhaps with Mr. [?] to dig for gold.

With best wishes

Yours Faithfully

F.A. Hagenauer

Bessie Rawlings

BPA, Minutes, 6 May, 1891⁶⁸

The half-caste woman, B. Rawlings, of Framlingham, applied for a railway pass to come to Melbourne to see her daughters. The application could not be granted in accordance with Regulations Sect. VII Sect. 28.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessie Rawlings, Framlingham,
6 May, 1891⁶⁹*

Mrs B. Rawlings,

Your application for a railway pass to Melbourne and back has been under the consideration of the Board this afternoon and I have

been instructed to state, that a pass cannot be granted.

With best wishes

Yours Truly

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs B. Rawlins, Framlingham,
9 May, 1891⁷⁰*

My dear Mrs Rawlins

It has been reported to this office that you have telegraphed to your daughter, in the services of Mrs. Cerutti, that you wish to come here and to fetch her home next week. You seem to ignore the fact that your daughter is and must be under the Regulations of the Law and that if you try to get the girl away, she will have to go before the Court. The fact is, it cannot be done at all, as long as you enjoy the receipt of Government support. White people can have their children, except they belong to the Department of the Industrial Schools. Half Castes, by earning their money and living without Government aid are considered white people and no one does interfere then, but if you wish to have Government support, you cannot do so. The moment you do so, rations and all other support as well as living on a reserve must stop and I shall have to inform Mr. Weir to this effect. My advice to you to consider what you do.

I shall have to inform John Ross and others to that effect next week so that all shall have the same choice in this matter.

The Board cannot break the law of the country.

With best wishes

yours very truly

F. A. Hagenauer

*W. J. Ditchburn, Acting Secretary, BPA, to Mrs B. Rawlings, Parmine,
1 October, 1892⁷¹*

Your letter of the 28th September regarding your daughter 'Ina', and requesting a pass to Melbourne to see her has been duly received at this Office.

With reference concerning the statement in your letter that possibly Mrs Cerutti has left Melbourne I am to inform you that an inquiry will be instituted in the matter and the result of such inquiry will be conveyed to you in due time. Mr Hagenauer is at present out of town, but on his return I will lay your letter before him.

Your obedient servant

W. J. Ditchburn

for Secretary

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessie Rawlings, Framlingham,
6 October, 1892⁷²*

My dear friend

In answer to your letter of the 28th ultimum I am happy to say, that I at once went out to see your daughter Ina Lancaster, and found her quite well at the old place at Mrs Ceruttys, which you know yourself. It seemed that she did not care to write but that she will be quite happy to see you at an early date.

Now in regard to my statement to you, that she was out of hands of the Board, I find in looking over these papers, that her time of apprenticeship is now[?] [?] under 18 months to come, when Ina will be quite free to please herself or to go into service at any place she or yourself may select. Then in regard to your [wish] to see Ina I think you are quite right to do so and for that reason I inclose you a pass which is for you and Mrs. Cousins⁷³, for I am very anxious to see her also in regard to her leaving Framlingham[.] The pass begins next Tuesday morning and is till Friday. Please leave together by the first train from Warrnambool and on arrival here come at once to my office, for I want to see you very much about your stay at Melbourne and other matters. Please speak to Mrs. Cousins and come together on the day mentioned.

I have no doubt you will find every thing well and will be much pleased with all[.]

With best wishes

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Rawlings, Lake Condah,
23 May, 1893⁷⁴*

My dear Mrs Rawlings,

I inclose you the pass for your return to Framlingham, only I have to state that the Board cannot pay any travelling expenses in future.

I was really very sorry when I heard that the old step father had died so suddenly and I think it would be very good if you could shift over and live near your dear old mother, who will often be in need of you. I am sorry to inform you, that the supply of meat for Framlingham has to be discontinued, as the Blacks have got the land and other Blacks get no meat neither. I believe Mr Weir will tell them at Framlingham the decision about it.

Your second daughter now having reached the age required by law will not receive any further supplies after the 30th June and it would be good if you could find a nice place for service for her.

With best wishes

yours faithfully

F.A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs B. Rawlings, Framlingham,
5 July, 1893⁷⁵*

My dear friend

You will be pleased to hear that your long desired wish will be now fulfilled and that your daughter Ina can and will leave the service of Mrs. Cerutti next week. She is very likely to go to Warrnambool on Thursday (13 July) and it will be good if you could come in to Warrnambool to meet her. I will write to you again, when she comes for certain and by what train she comes.

It will be good if you will look out for a good place either in Warrnambool or in your neighborhood so that you can see her when you like.

With best wishes

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Rawlings, Framlingham,
15 August, 1893⁷⁶*

My dear friend

Knowing how difficult it is just now to get employment for your daughters I inclose you an order for rations for 4 weeks longer but with the understanding that I cannot do so again in future. I hope in a short time to visit you all at Framlingham Regarding Mrs Austin and her daughter, I have to state that her case is an exception altogether[.]

With best wishes

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Bessie Rawlings, Purnim, to Rev. Stähle, missionary, Lake Condah,
29 September, 1893⁷⁷*

Dear Sir

I am writing you a few lines hoping to find you & family all well & also my dear mother. I hope that she is keeping well. Mr Stahle I want to know please if you will kindly let my daughter Ina stay with her grandmother for a while until Xmas [or] longer if you will allow her to stay. Poor mother I feel very much for her[.] I wish you would please Mr Stahle allow my dear mother to come & spend her few days with me[.] This is all at present[.] God bless you all[.]

PS send me back reply, please sir excuse this paper

I remain your humble servant

Bessie Rawlings

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessie Rawlings, Framlingham,
2 November, 1893⁷⁸*

My dear friend

The Revd Mr. Stahle has sent your letter of the 29th of September to the Board, asking permission that your daughter Ina Lancaster, may stay with your mother at Condah till Christmas. The Board has granted a certificate for her to stay there to the end of December 93, but she must leave after that date, and it will be well, if you do your best to get a good place for Ina in Warrnambool or in your neighbourhood. The Board will also gladly allow your dear old mother to visit you for sometime if Mr. Stahle will approve of it. I have written to him about your mother and Ina, but it may be well, if you also write and ask for his permission. I hope soon to visit Framlingham, when I hope to see you and husband.

With kindest regards

faithfully yours

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Betzie Rawlings,
Framlingham, 24 March, 1895⁷⁹*

Dear friend

I received your letter this morning and have made a note regarding the clothes and sizes for children.

I will bring your wishes for your daughters under the notice of the Board, because I cannot do it myself.

I have telegraphed to Mr. Akeroyd to send the doctor to Old Diana. It is quite true, it would be ever so much better if she and the old man would come to Framlingham for a while, or if she would go to the Warrnambool hospital, because she would much sooner recover.

With best wishes to all

F. A. Hagenauer

In 1895 the BPA passed a resolution that some of the Aborigines at Framlingham be removed to other stations. The BPA obtained an Order-in-Council for the removal of the Rawlings family to Lake Condah mission station. However, Bessie and William defied the Board by refusing to leave.⁸⁰

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs B. Rawlings, c/o Lewis, The
Reserve, Parmine, 23 April, 1897⁸¹*

Madam

I have the honor to inform you that the letter signed by you and a number of other residents at Framlingham and directed to the Honorable Mr [?] has reached its destination and that I am instructed[?] to inform all those who harbor half castes in their houses to at once

[refrain from doing so] as otherwise rations and supplies will be stopped after [?] days. I would advise you to get passes[?] for those of your children who should be seeking[?] [?] service and also to apply for the time being for permission under[?] a certificate for your daughter who got a baby etc.

I have the honor to be
Your obedient Servant
F. A. Hagenauer
Gen. Inspectr of Aborigines

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs B. Rawlings, Parmine,
7 May, 1897⁸²*

In answer to your letter of yesterday I have to inform that your son cannot remain any longer on the station and if you keep him you cannot remain any longer on the station and if you keep him you may come in great [trouble] for yourself and your family. Regarding your daughter I will bring your petition before the Board at next meeting and until then she may remain with you but longer time cannot be allowed. I am glad that Ina is gone to service in Warrnambool.

I hope that you will carry out the above request, because it would bring you into trouble.

With best wishes
F. A. Hagenauer
Secretary

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs W. Rawlings, The Camp,
Framlingham, 26 May, 1897⁸³*

Your boots etc have been sent today in a separate parcel from here. Your parcel was packed up into another larger one, which is addressed to Mr W. Lewis, Parmine via Warrnambool. If you inquire at Mr. Lewis in a few days you will get it there.

I have not been able to obtain the permission for your daughter to stay with you until she can go to Mr Bells place. You will have to be careful about Henry Albert who also wishes to live at Mr Bells place.

With best wishes
I remain yours truly
F. A. Hagenauer

BPA, Minutes, 13 October, 1897⁸⁴

Mrs Rawlings asked whether her half caste daughter and her daughter could live at Framlingham and for more supplies. Request refused.

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessie Rawlings, The Camp, Parmine, 14 October, 1897⁸⁵

Madam

I have the honour to inform you that your application to the above Board "to allow your daughter to stay with you and to grant some rations to her and likewise to yourself 3 bags of seed potatoes and other seeds" has been duly considered at yesterdays meeting and I am directed to inform you that none of your applications could be granted.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant

F. A. Hagenauer

Gen. Inspector & Secretary

Bessie Rawlings, Purnim, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary, 26 January, 1904⁸⁶

Sir

Just a few lines asking you sir if you will kindly see the Board to let me & my husband have a little ration as my husband is not at all well[;] he came home quite broken down after seeing our darling child how thin she looked[;] he cant get over it at all[;] you know dear sir that was for our children sake & most of all for dear [?] that we left the Board [?] we told the members when they came down to Condah that we would do for our selfs & not trouble them for rations but now I see that I must trouble them so now I am writing to you for help[;] please mr murray Kindly oblige your humble servant

Bessie Rawlings

Eliza O'Rourke

In the late 1880s Eliza's daughter Martha was sent to work for a Mrs Keys at Keysborough. Eliza repeatedly asked the Board for the return of her daughter as she did not want Martha to remain in Mrs Keys' service. However, Martha was not allowed back to Lake Tyers.⁸⁷

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Eliza O'Rourke, Lake Tyers, 28 August, 1891⁸⁸

My dear friend

I received your letter about your daughter Martha in due time and in answer of the same I may assure you, that I had not forgotten my promise to get her another good place, but it is difficult sometimes to do so. I hope, however, shortly to succeed and will then let you know of it and of course, also your Martha, she deserves a good place and I will do what I can to get it.

I am glad to hear of the good progress some of you make in regard to your spiritual life. May God bless you[.]

Yours faithfully

F.A. Hagenauer

*Eliza O'Rourke, Lake Tyers, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 26 March, 1914*⁸⁹

Dear Ma"dm

I have the pleasure of writing you a few lines letting you know how I am. I am keeping well just at present[;] at times I feel broken up[;] my boys are all away from here with the acception of only one[:] my youngest who is my right hand. My oldest son Ted O'Rourke was down for his holiday at Christmas from Lake Condah[;] he just arrived the Christmas morning[;] Mr Ditchburn wrote to Capt Howe to tell him that my son Ted O'Rourke was to only stop a fortnight on Lake Tyers[;] he was to ill after his travelling[;] he rode the Bicycle from Melbourne because he couldn't get a pass to come right through[;] he used to have a license before he left Lake Condah[;] during his holiday here his license was stopped[;] he thought he could get his license transferred from Lake Condah to Corranderrke an when he went back from here he found out that they wouldn't give him a license for Corranderrke[;] he is not a strong healthy man for work[;] he not able enough to work for himself[;] when he takes ill is down in bed[;] I am fretting about him[;] Dear ma'dm could you help to get him a license for Corranderrk[?] he lived there before[;] he does not care to go back to Lake Condah the climate doesn't agree with him. Please Mrs Bon like a Christian friend have pity on my son[.] I am his mother a widow at Lake Tyers[.] I cant help from troubling about my son Ted. if he was a strong healthy young man I would never trouble about him[;] he is living at Tarawarra near Healesville. Would you kindly do that for me[?] I am

your obedient servant

Eliza O'Rourke

Mrs Bon enquired into the matter and was informed by the BPA Secretary Mr Ditchburn that the manager at Coranderrk refused to recommend Edward O'Rourke's application on account of Edward's drinking habit and because he considered Edward incapable of working outside the station.

*Eliza O'Rourke, Lake Tyers, to BPA, 6 April, 1914*⁹⁰

Gentlemen

Sirs

I am writing to ask you if you will give my son Teddy permission to come and live on the station with me, as I hear he is not on the Coranderrk Mission Station and I feel very uneasy to think that he is excluded from the comforts I receive, knowing he cannot support himself being in delicate health since he left Lake Tyers[;] so if you will

kindly grant my request I shall be very grateful to you for your kindnesses to me.

I am
Gentlemen
Sirs
yours respectfully
Mrs Eliza O'Rourke

Captain Howe, manager at Lake Tyers, thought that a license might be granted to Teddy on the condition of good behaviour. However, it seems that Teddy did not apply for a license until 1917 when one was granted to him.

Eliza O'Rourke, Lake Tyers, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 8 August, 1918⁹¹

Dear Mrs Bon

I have a request to make to you & I want your help in the matter[.] I am still in trouble about my son Gordon. he is still off the station and he is causing me great anxiety & misery. I pass many a sleepless nights, worrying over him. I cannot be happy as long as my son is off this station. I thought that I would ease my mind & will & ask your help to get him back again on the station.

I spoke to Mr Ferguson three times about him & asked him if he would recommend (Gordon's) his license, & he said one time to me, that it depended on his behaviour & the last time I spoke to him he said that it rested with the Board. About a month, Gordon came home from Orbest to help these others to play football against Lakes Entrance, & while waiting for the other matches to come off he filled in his time, working & doing up my little garden for me, as he knew that I couldnt do it myself. Well, altogether he stayed a month on the place, & Mr Ferguson reckoned that that month went against him, as well, (what for, I dont know)[.] He did not do any murder, or commit any serious crime. Dear Mrs Bon I told him straight away that I was going to write & tell you everything & ask your help in this matter[.] He didnt seem to like the idea of my writing to you, as he says you are only one member in the Board. Do try your best to help me, as Mr Ferguson seemed to delight in the thought of keeping my son away when he knows very well that it worries me so. Would you advise me, what to do about my son. Mr Ferguson said that he would have to apply for a license, but not from this place. Also, it would have to pass through his hands.

I may drop a few lines to the Chief Secretary sometime this week about the same thing. I do hope and trust that God will answer my prayer. I could not sleep the other night. I tossed & turned about till I was utterly worn out. I thought that I would ease my mind in praying to my Heavenly Father & ask for help to overcome my weakness[.] I seemed to feel comforted & while I laid down & thought or it seemed like a small voice saying to me "Write & ask Mrs Bon's advice[;] she

will help you[“]. Dear lady try your best to help me as I have full confidence in you. Kindly remember me & my sons to our dear old friend Mr Howat. I do hope & trust that he is keeping well in health, also your dear self.

With kind regards to you
from all my family &
myself especially
I am your loving friend
Eliza O'Rourke

Mrs Bon submitted the matter to the Board. It is not clear what the Board decided. A note written by Mrs Bon stated that Gordon O'Rourke was one of the leaders of the gambling that had long gone on at Lake Tyers. However, she did not think removal from home and relatives was a good way to deal with these men as it only hardened them in crime.

*Eliza O'Rourke, Lake Tyers, to Mr Bowser, Chief Secretary,
February, 1919⁹²*

Dear Sir

Just a line or two to ask you to advise me what to do, as I'm troubled about my youngest son (James)[.] The Board said a little while back that he would have to marry Grace Edwards or else leave the station for good. Well last October, he asked the parents of the girl, for their consent, which they gave[.] I and my family were all agreeable to the marriage[;] they were to be married early this year, as they both were willing to marry one another. But, now Mr Ferguson gave him a letter in which, he says that his license is cancelled & he must leave the place, which he has done. I am sending you a copy of the letter which he gave to my son so you will be able to see for yourself.

Kindly send me a reply, as soon as possible & advise me what to do, as I'm terribly anxious[.]

And oblige
yours truly
Eliza O'Rourke

Emily Brindle

In 1878 Rev. Hagenauer banished Emily and her family from Ramahyuck because her husband James and several other Aboriginal men wrote a letter of complaint about Hagenauer to the BPA. Hagenauer recommended that as punishment the Board remove Emily's children to an orphanage.⁹³ Instead, the Brindles took their children to Lake Tyers. After her husband died Emily remarried⁹⁴ in 1884 and the family moved to Bairnsdale, where her friend Bessy Cameron was living. In 1890 Bessy Cameron wrote to the Board on behalf of Emily asking that the Brindles be allowed to return to Ramahyuck. Emily's children were very sick and she could not

manage to pay bills. The Board realised the case was urgent and allowed the Brindles to reside and receive rations at Ramahyuck for one month. However after that time the Brindles were forced to return to Bairnsdale. The missionary at Lake Tyers, John Bulmer, found work for Emily's daughter Emma in the district, but after three months Emma was ill again.

*BPA, Minutes, 10 February, 1892*⁹⁵

Mrs E Brindle asked whether the Board would kindly allow her 2 boys John & James Brindle – 9 & 11 to be sent to the orphanage or industrial schools. Application granted.

*Report of BPA meeting, Argus, 11 February, 1892*⁹⁶

An application having been received from a half-caste named Emily Brindle for her two eldest boys, named James and John Brindle, to be admitted into industrial schools or the Brighton Orphanage, so that they might receive a proper education and training, it was decided that the steps necessary for the admission of the lads should be taken. The secretary asked for the board's opinion relative to half-caste children whose parents did not any longer receive Government support. He wished to know if they could be hired out and apprenticed by the board under present regulations, or whether the board had no further responsibility regarding them. The board replied that they had no further responsibility, and could not apprentice them.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale, 30 November, 1892*⁹⁷

My dear friend

I am glad to say that I have been successful to obtain the inclosed pass for you and Emma but you must do your best to be back to Bairnsdale on the date stated on the pass. I also hope that you will find your boys well and in good spirits.

I am afraid I shall be away from Melbourne when you come here as I have to finish all inspections before Christmas. Haines and George Credie will come for Bessie and her things on Friday afternoon and return to Ramahyuck on Saturday

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

In January 1893 Emily asked the Board to help her get her sons back from the Neglected Children's Department.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale,
18 January, 1893⁹⁸*

My dear Mrs Brindle

I duly received your letter and at once made inquiry about your sick Jack and also if he could be returned to you in Company with his little Brother. I was informed that both boys had been brought for the sake of health to Sandhurst and that the doctor had given instruction to send Jack to the Hospital, but Mrs. Harcourt, the Lady in whose care the children are did not wish to separate the boys and the Department has granted special allowance for the sick child. The doctor states that there is no hope for life for him and that he cannot be removed as he is too ill.

Then I have made inquiry if you could get the children back in case you take them with you to New South Wales and they informed me that this could be done only to obtain an order in Council from the Governor.

I asked if you could get the children back to live with you at Bairnsdale and the reply is, that if you can prove that the children receive every comfort and are well cared for by yourself and either a Magistrate or Clergyman can certify to that effect it may be possible. On the whole, I think you would do well, to leave the boys where they are and that you should visit them. I think you have already much trouble with poor sick Emma – I will leave here and visit you at Bairnsdale tomorrow to see what is best and I will bring a pass with me

In haste, yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

By early February, 1893, Emily had her two boys living with her again.⁹⁹

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale,
24 February, 1893¹⁰⁰*

My dear Mrs Brindle

I duly received your letter informing me of the death of your dear little boy, and I wish again to express my sympathy with your grief in the matter.

I am glad to be able to include form of account towards the funeral. The total amount allowed by the Board can only be £2.10.0 and if it is more you will have to pay it yourself. Kindly let the Undertaker sign the account where it is marked in pencil with the X in two places, and when signed, send it home in the inclosed envelope. Tell me also how poor Emma is getting on.

With best wishes

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale,
17 April, 1893¹⁰¹*

My dear friend,

I have much pleasure in answer to your former letter to say that the Board has given permission for your Emma to reside at Lake Tyers and I inclose the required certificate, which can be received after the 30th of June[?] The only condition is that you have to pay the travelling expenses to the Station. The certificate Emma must give to Mr Bulmer.

I thank you very much for your beautiful cup. It was very kind and considerate of you to send it.

Wishing you every good

I am Yours Truly

F. A. Hagenauer

Emily's daughter Emma died in early March, 1894. She had now lost two children in the space of 13 months. Later that month the Board arranged for Emily's son John Ellis to live at Coranderrk under a certificate, in order that his health might improve.¹⁰² From July to October 1894 the Board supplied Emily and her family with rations.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale,
20 July, 1894¹⁰³*

My dear Mrs. Brindle

I hope your Johnny has arrived safely and that you have been able to meet him, he looks very delicate and ought to be careful how he lives. I have sent a parcel of clothes for him and if he calls at the railway station tomorrow he will find nice warm clothes and I trust he will enjoy it. He may stay with you till you go to N.S.W. I will get his ration order added to yours and send it next week.

Johnny should at once send me a short note to thank the Board for the nice things.

Emily Edwards

*Emily Edwards, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
August, 1907¹⁰⁴*

Dear Sir

I am writing you these few lines to ask you if I could have Effie Albert back again with me as I am not very well & I want the girl to look after me[.] Im getting blind cant very well see now to do any thing for my self, could you kindly let me know at once if any thing could be done for me[.] I had the girl ever since she was very young...& theres noone to look after the poor children so Ill be very thankful if I could be allowed with the girl I adopted & her child[.] Ill keep them myself, see that the girl will be kept straight Im in great trouble now thinking about the girl[.] Ill be going away next week if possible to Condah for a

couple of days just to see the children[.] please answer letter so this will be all at present

yrs truly
Emily Edwards

Mr Ditchburn asked Rev. Stähle at Lake Condah for his opinion. Stähle replied that Effie Albert was currently residing at Dunmore with her child of about two years of age. He could not give any advice regarding Emily Edwards' request.

Kate Mullett

*Kate Johnson, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretray, BPA,
September, 1907¹⁰⁵*

To the Secretary of the board
please could you kindly give me a pass for me and my children that I want to go to Corranderrke to were my sister is[.] I would like to go to her very much[.] I will be much happier with her[.] I will not have no

I must conclud
your friend
Kate Johnson

In September 1907 Kate and her children moved to Coranderrk. She married James Mullett in 1908.

In February 1910 the manager Mr Robarts recommended that the Mullett family be expelled from the station on account of their 'troublesome' behaviour. The family moved to Lake Condah but again came into conflict with the mission management. In November 1910 Mary Stähle, matron, reported to the Board that Kate Mullett was 'outrageously rude to me when I was on my round, inspecting the houses'. Some time after this event Mrs Stähle heard Kate's children screaming and dancing at 11 oclock at night. When she told Kate to send the children to bed Kate 'flew into a rage asking how I dared to come into her house & tell her what to do about her children! As she was dreadfully abusive & insulting stamped her foot, shouted & put herself in a threatening attitude I left her'. In December Rev. Stähle wrote to the Board asking for instructions as to how to deal with Kate. The Secretary informed Stähle that if necessary he could stop Kate's rations until she expressed regret. A warning was sent to Kate by the Vice Chairman of the Board that if she did not apologise for her conduct she and her family would be removed from Lake Condah and not allowed at any of the other stations. On 13 December 1910 Kate apologised and that day she and her family left for Warrnambool. However, they were not allowed rations there and they returned to Coranderrk, camping outside the station.

During the next year the family lived at Cunninghame, near Lake Tyers. In January 1912 the manager at Lake Tyers arranged for

Kate's daughters Ida and Priscilla Johnson to be placed in a home in Melbourne. In April 1912 Kate and three of her younger children moved back to Coranderrk in order that she might visit Ida and Priscilla at the home. During the next few years she strove to have them returned to her.

*Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Callaway, Vice Chairman, BPA,
3 April, 1912¹⁰⁶*

Please sir kindly allow me to stay here for a short time as I want to visit my two daughters that are in the homes has I call to see you on monday but you was not their[.] I wanted to see you very much[.] I got two little small children with me & a baby also[.] I saw Mr Ditchburne but he gave me no proper answer[;] that is the reason why I am asking your permission to stay with my sister till my husband comes up from Gippsland[;] he his working yet for a while[;] he will be here in 6 weeks time[;] it is very hard Mr Robarts having me away of the station with my three little children[.] I think it is a great shame Mr Ditchburne will not let me stay for a little while[;] my husband his a black man[.] has I got three little ones[;] kindly answer my letter

Kate Mullett

On receipt of Kate's letter Mr Callaway noted 'If it is practicable to comply with this request I shall be glad if Mr Robarts can arrange for the sake of the children, subject to the mother's good conduct'.

*Kate Mullett, Coranderrk to Mr Callaway, Vice Chairman, BPA,
21 May, 1912¹⁰⁷*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines thanking you very much for letting my three little ones and myself to remain on the station till my husband comes[.] I have given no trouble to any one on the station and I also thank Mr Robarts for been kind to me while I am here[.] Please Mr Calaway would you kindly allow my husband a month to stay at Coranderrk as he will be coming from Bairnsdale and my two little boys as I want to see about my girls that are in the homes[;] trusting you will oblige

yours truly

Kate Mullett

By August 1912 Kate's husband Jim was working near Coranderrk. Mr Robarts wanted them to return to Gippsland but they refused. Some of the Coranderrk people sent a petition to the Chief Secretary asking that the Mulletts be allowed to stay. Later that year Jim Mullett found work at Dunmore near Lake Condah, while Kate remained at Coranderrk.

Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary, 1 July, 1912¹⁰⁸

Dear Sir,

Please I wont you to do me a favour if you could help me to get my two girls out of the Homes as they were sent there as neglected children. It was through the manager at Lake Tyers who done all this as they use to go to school and like all other children played about too long after school hours[.] When they were sent away it was said by the Police Magistrate that they were to be sent to the Homes till we were ready to go on to a Mission Station. They were to be transferred to were we were to live as it was no place of ours to be roaming about with so many children. I've 5 little ones & my two girls. They are black girls & I am against them to go out into the world as their is a pure aboriginal. I come from Gippsland to see my two girls but Mr Ditchburn told me he did not know where they were so it makes me feel like if something has happened to them[;] don't know whether they are dead or alive to this day[.] I wrote twice to my girls at the Homes but got no reply[.] I then come out to Coranderrk Mission Station with a broken heart not seeing my own flesh and blood which God has given to me as a comfort & I would like them to live with me till death does part us[.] I would like very much for you to be there at the meeting as my husband has sent a letter through Mr Robarts if he could live here as he has no home[;] 5 little ones & he cant sent them to school has he is always shifting from place to place for work. Trusting in your help and in the Grace of God help I may be able to see my too dear girls again

I remain

Yrs respectfully
Kate Mullett

Mr Murray conferred with Mr Ditchburn who replied:

The children referred to in the attached communication were brought before the Children's Court at Cunninghame on the 17th January last, charged with being neglected, and were committed by the Police Magistrate to the care of the Department for Neglected Children. In view of the facts submitted to the Court and the history of the parents, it would be inadvisable to comply with this request.

*Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
4 November, 1912¹⁰⁹*

I am asking you kindly to let me stay on for another month till my husband finds a home for me & children

Kate Mullett

Kate was given permission by the Board to stay at Coranderrk so long as her conduct was satisfactory and so long as Jim Mullett forwarded to the Board one half of his wages for the maintenance of his family.

*Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
12 May, 1913¹¹⁰*

Dear Sir

I am asking of you a favour if you would kindly allow me to see my two girls at Mr Ditchburn office as I am passing through by the 11 o'clock on Monday to Milltown[.] Trusting you will oblige

yours respectfully

Kate Mullett

Ditchburn noted that 'It would probably upset the girls if Mrs Mulletts request were acceded. The girls are doing well and there is no special reason why the interview should be granted. The N. C. Department disapprove of the proposal'. The comment 'Undesirable' was written below by another member of the Board. A letter to this effect was sent to Kate.

*Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 10 March,
1914¹¹¹*

Dear Sir

Would you kindly place my letter before the members of the Board[.] I wish to ask if I could have my two girls who were sent to the Homes Now that I have a home on Coranderrk where I am well able to look after them[;] also I have so many little children I would like their help[;] they were promised to me as soon as I got a home

I am yrs truly

Kate Mullett

Mr Robarts forwarded Kate's letter with the comment: 'I consider the girls as much better off where they are than on an Aboriginal Station'.

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Kate Mullett, Coranderrk,
18 March, 1914¹¹²*

Memo.

Your letter of the 10th instant, has been received, and in reply I am directed to state that no promise has been made to return the two girls to your care, and, that, as it is considered desirable they should learn to earn their living outside the stations, your request to have them returned to you cannot be granted.

*Ada Young, Matron, Girls Home, Riddell, to Mr Smith, Secretary,
Neglected Children's Department, 25 March, 1916¹¹³*

Dear Sir,

The bearer – Mrs Mullet – is the mother of the above named girls, & she is anxious to get her daughters home to assist her. These girls have now been some four years with me in this Home, & I recommend that the mother be allowed to have her daughters with her on the Mission Station at Healesville

I am Sir

Yours Faithfully
Ada M Young
Matron

Mr Smith urged the BPA to resume charge of Ida and Priscilla Johnson. He pointed out that Priscilla was now 18 and free from the legal control of the Department, and that 'there seems to be no hope of improving them'. Mr Ditchburn replied to Mr Smith on 28 March that 'I am directed to request that you will be good enough to arrange for an extension of their term, until they reach the age of twenty years'. On 26 October 1916, Kate Mullett, accompanied by her daughter Priscilla and the Matron of the Girls' Home, called at the BPA office. The Matron told Ditchburn that Priscilla was no longer under the legal control of the Department, and Kate asked to be allowed to take Priscilla back to Coranderrk. Ditchburn granted permission for Priscilla to stay at Coranderrk for one week pending enquiries and wrote to the manager at Coranderrk for his opinion. On 23 November Mr Robarts replied that he saw no necessity for Priscilla Johnson to remain at Coranderrk as she was a strong young woman who should be able to find employment. 'I would recommend in this case that Priscilla Johnson be placed in a situation away from this district so that she cannot be coming in and out of the station, and that she be bound down to a situation, otherwise she might give some trouble'.

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Kate Mullett, Coranderrk,
8 December, 1916¹¹⁴*

Memo.

With reference to your daughter Priscilla Johnson, I am to inform you that the Board has given permission for her to remain at the station for one month and she must then leave, if in the meantime she has not obtained a situation.

It must be distinctly understood that the girl who is capable of earning her own living should not be dependent upon the Government for support and should therefore obtain work in domestic or other service.

*Mr Heathershaw, Inspector of Aborigines, to Mr Robarts, manager,
Coranderrk, 16 January, 1917¹¹⁵*

Memorandum

Priscilla Johnson is at present at the Royal Park Depot. She has been wandering about the city and the Military Camps and was in a filthy condition when taken into the home. She will be escorted to Healesville by the first train tomorrow and the Superintendent has been notified to have her met at the station. Mr Robarts is requested to retain her on the Station until the Board decide what is to be done with her.

Priscilla ended up staying at Coranderrk where she married Willie Logan.

*Mr Robarts, manager, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
27 March, 1917*

Sir

I wish to report that the half caste girl Ida Johnson, an inmate of the Salvation Army Home Riddell escaped from that Institution on the 18th inst. and arrived here on Thursday night 22inst. I reported the matter to the Police who took charge of her yesterday and returned her to the Salvation Army Home. Mrs Kate Mullett, a resident here, is the mother of this girl.

*Constable Deeley[?], Healesville, to Supt. Nolan, Bourke District,
30 March, 1917¹¹⁶*

Report relative to absconder Ida Johnson

I have to report that the above named girl was arrested by me at Coranderrk aboriginal station & returned to the reformatory at Riddell. I am given to understand that the parents of the girl are endeavouring to have the girl returned to them at Coranderrk, from the reformatory, and in my opinion if this were done it would be the means of causing considerable trouble at Coranderrk as the girl is uncontrollable, and admitted to me that during the period that she was away from the reformatory she had been consorting with soldiers and she also stated that when she, with other girls, left the reformatory they were armed with axes & knives & would have used them on anyone who attempted to interfere with them.

I would therefore ask that this report be forwarded to the Board for the Protection of Aborigines for their information.

Later in 1917 Ida Johnson was sent to Oakleigh Reformatory along with several other Aboriginal girls: Rhoda and Kate McLellan, and Minna Hood. In early December Ida was admitted to the Melbourne Hospital suffering from pneumonia. Kate Mullett went to Melbourne to be with Ida, who eventually died on 26 December. Kate wanted Ida to be

buried at Coranderrk alongside her own people, and the Board agreed to this.

Mrs Bon, BPA, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 9 January, 1918¹¹⁷

I am glad the mother's wishes were respected regarding the internment of her poor erring child who, we hope thru the loving mercy of God is now safe in glory.

*Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
4 February, 1918¹¹⁸*

Dear Sir

My boy Campbell was down at the office & saw Mr Parker[;] his wish was to go to Lake Tyers to see his Grand Mother as she is very old, and would like very much to see him as he has got his own Uncle & Aunt there & would like to stay with them. We spoke to Mr Roberts & he told us to write in[.] Would you kindly grant my son a pass as its my wish for him to see his dear old Grand Mother[;] trusting you will kindly oblige

yrs faithfully
Kate Mullett

Mr Roberts added a note: 'Campbell Johnson is...very restless and desirous of getting away. He went to Melbourne on Staurday without my consent or knowledge. As he is anxious to go to his relatives (the Johnsons) at Lake Tyers, the change may be beneficial. I would recommend that the application be granted'. The Board approved the application.

Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, May, 1918¹¹⁹

Dear Sir

As I am writing in would you kindly grant me a pass to Lake Tyers for me and my family as all my relations are there. And also my son Campbell as he has got no settle place to have his meals. As I felt it my duty to be there to look after him. And besides I have got Bronchitis and I would lik to go for a change as it is hanging on to me[;] at times I get very ill[.] As my relat have told me there is a empty house for me and my family[;] trusting you will oblige

I am
yrs respectfully
Kate Mullet

Mr Roberts recommended that this request be allowed since all the Aborigines were to be transferred to Lake Tyers eventually. Mr Parker replied that there was no accommodation at present for Kate and her family but that they would be transferred when room was available.

Kate Mullett, Coranderrk, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, August, 1918¹²⁰

Dear Sir

Would you kindly grant me a pass for me and my family to get away as soon as possible. As I suffer with Bronchitis and I get very sick at times[;] this place dosent agree with me[.] As I am very anxious to get away to Lake Tyers as my son Campbell and relatives are there.

As some of the people have written here and said there was a empty house ready for me

I am

yours truly

Kate Mullett

Kate was informed by the Board that passes would be sent as soon as new buildings were erected at Lake Tyers; all the buildings at the present time were reserved for people from Lake Condah. The Mulletts moved to Lake Tyers in January 1919.

Jemima Dunolly

Jemima Wandin, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 30 November, 1908¹²¹

Dear Sir

I am just writing (through you) to ask the Board if they could let me and also my four children the youngest 10 years of age a pass to go for a holiday to Echuca on the 21st December. I have been a resident on Coranderrk for over forty years and I have never been away for a trip at the expense of the Government yet. I have not been to my native home since I left it nor seen any of my relations[,] my only sister in particular[,] and I should like to see her once more. Should they think fit to grant me this humble request I would be very thankful. I had the pleasure of speaking to Mr Watt last week and he told me to write to the Board and explain to them

And Oblidge Yours

Mrs J Wandin

In February 1911 Mr Robarts, manager of Coranderrk, informed the Board that Jemima and Tom Dunolly intended to leave the station. Jemima's main reason was that some of her family were not allowed to live on the station and Tom could only live on the station under a license. Jemima wanted to know whether they could get passes to Echuca and also a transport order to take their goods. Mr Robarts recommended that her request be granted as they were in his eyes 'a very deserving family & always well conducted'.¹²² However, the Dunollys changed their mind and decided to stay at Coranderrk. They visited the Chairman of the BPA personally to explain for themselves

their change of mind. Mr Roberts gave them the following letter to take to the BPA office.

*Mr Roberts, manager, Coranderrk, to Mr Callaway, Vice Chairman, BPA,
27 February, 1911*

Mrs Dunolly has lived here from the time the station was first established, she is a good woman & Tom is a very useful man he being the carpenter. The great trouble is, the half caste parents do not like their children having to go out & this is why Mrs Dunolly wanted to go out so she could have her children with her when she wished...

In March 1912 Mr Roberts wrote to the Board that he wanted the Dunollys to leave the station because Tom Dunolly was quarrelling with another man on the station. Roberts also thought that Jemima Dunolly should go with her husband: 'Mrs Dunolly's long residence may call for some reasonable consideration, but she should follow her husband, she only has one girl 14 years of age to provide for, she has three boys one 16 years of age the others over 20 [and] while she is here she harbours them about the station. The youngest boy is only half his time employed, the other half he is knocking about here, the elder boys during the past eight months have been the same'. Roberts changed his mind later, however, and the Dunollys remained at Coranderrk.

*Jemima Dunolly, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
5 July, 1913¹²³*

Sir

I have received a letter from my daughter from Mooroolbark where she is been serviceing[.] She has been away from me this 14 years and it 7 years since she been here last and she has ask if she could come home for a month[;] she is not well[;] she is in decline and wasting to a shadow[;] her & her little daughter age 9 wish to come for a month[.] I will be very thankful to you if you will allow her to come on Tuesday next

I remain yours
most obedient servant
Mrs T Dunolly

The Board decided that Jemima's daughter Ellen Wandin could stay at Coranderrk for a month.

*Jemima Dunolly, Healesville, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
16 December, 1913¹²⁴*

Dear Sir

I am writing for permission for my three sons to stay with me at Coranderrk through the Christmas Holidays for a fortnight[;] kindly oblige

Hoping to hear favourably
Shortly
Yours Obedient Servant
Mrs T. Dunolly

Frank, William & James Wandin

Jemima's request was approved.

In July 1916 Tom Dunolly obtained permission to go to Cumeroogunga where some of his family resided, to take advantage of the warmer climate as he was suffering from bronchitis. When he arrived there he had to go to hospital. Jemima then obtained permission to visit her husband in Echuca.

*Jemima Dunolly, c/o Mrs H. Nelson Junior, Echuca, to Mr Ditchburn,
Secretary, BPA, 1 October, 1916¹²⁵*

Sir

A very pleasant opportunity prevails itself to me for to pen you these few lines[,] trusting you and yours are enjoying the very best of health as it leaves me enjoying good health at present. My Husband is still in the Hospital and well improving[;] he will be leaving the hospital on Saturday. Sir I was speaking to Mr Callaway in reference to a pass for my Husband and which he had promised me[;] trusting you will kindly oblige me by forwarding one pass for my Husband by Saturday. I have my return pass. The floods up here is awful[;] a great part of Echuca town is submerged[;] there are hundred of town people driven out of their houses by the flood[;] also a great number of farmers who have suffered very severely. I will now close

With all gratitude
and respect Mrs T Dunolly

Jemima's son James served in the First World War during which time she received his military allotment. About January 1918 the BPA arranged for the Defence Department to cancel her allotment because it considered that Aborigines living on stations had no need of this money. Jemima went to the Defence Department to complain, stating that her allotment money was not put to bad use; she was sending

parcels and money to James regularly and was keeping herself with the balance. The Defence Department consulted again with the Board who decided that Jemima's allotment could be recontinued.

Ellen Richards

Ellen Richards, Coranderrk to Mrs Bon, BPA, 31 May, 1909¹²⁶

Dear Mrs Bon

Could I have Ivy Dunolly here with me to be a company with me[?] would you be kind enough to ask the Board for Protection of Aborigines if they will allow her to stay here on Coranderrk with me[?] her age is only 10 years old[.] I will be very much obliged to you.

I am your's truly friend

Mrs Richards

Ellen's request was approved by the Board

Ellen died in April 1921. She was nursed by Annie Manton to the end. On her death Mrs Robarts wrote to the Board: 'With the passing of Ellen Richards the Station has lost a strong clean and upright living woman, her ever loyal heart to what was good and true...'.¹²⁷

Amelia Rose

M. Gleeson, local guardian, Woodford, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 1 May, 1911

Memo - I have to report that Henry Rose half caste is drinking a good deal of late and causing a lot of annoyance in his home. I have warned him previously but apparently without the desired effect. He would keep of the drink for a time but again break out as bad as ever. I would respectfully suggest that Mr Ditchburn write to him and thereafter to stop his rations if he does not give up his drunken habits. This I believe would have the desired effect.

Mr Ditchburn sent Henry Rose a letter requesting that he write back stating whether he intended to conduct himself properly and decently in the future. Henry replied denying the charge.

M. Gleeson, local guardian, Woodford, memo re conduct of Henry Rose, to Secretary, BPA, 30 May, 1911¹²⁸

....it was not at the station that it took place but at his own home and his wife wrote a letter to Sergt Arthur of Warrnambool re same. Now, I must in justice to myself point out that Rose has repeatedly got drunk and caused trouble both at his own home and at the Purnim Hotel. I have warned him, but evidently he has no intention of reforming as he makes no attempt to say so in his attached letter. The letter his wife sent to the Warrnambool Police was sent on to me and I returned it there with my report attached.

On 21 July 1911 Mr Ditchburn wrote to Mr Gleeson informing him that the Board was considering taking the Rose family, along with the Arden and Austin families, under its control, according to the provision of the 1910 Act. Gleeson reported back that he thought this action was desirable because each of these families was large, living in small huts, and the fathers in each case were drunkards. What little the men earned in wood cutting they spent on drink. He thought it desirable for the Board to have greater power over these families. In August 1911 the Board decided that the children of these three families should be removed to the Neglected Children's Department: 'It is considered that the immoral atmosphere in which the little ones live will have a most debasing effect upon them and that they should be removed without delay'.

Gleeson wrote to the Board on 20 October:

'I believe there will be a good deal of trouble in the removal of these children from their parents and violence may probably be used if an attempt is made to take the children. These people seem greatly attached to their children. They suspected they were likely to be taken away from them when I was enquiring about their ages and got into the most violent temper and said the children would not be taken from them alive - and they said they prefer to keep their children and give up the govt rations & clothes. These people have suspected this action of the Board for some time & in consequence have been attending to their children & homes better. especially Mrs H. Rose - this is not a bad class of woman & tries to do her best & her children & hut look as if she attends to her home - I would recommend that the Rose family be not taken at present.'

Gleeson thought it better to move a whole family to a mission station or give them a warning in writing that unless they mended their ways and attended to their children's wants and education their children would be taken away. The Board appeared to take Gleeson's advice and decided to remove the three families to mission stations. The Rose family were to go to Coranderrk and arrangements were made for their transfer. A petition was sent to the Board in December 1911 signed by many residents of Purnim and Framlingham districts that the Rose family be allowed to remain 'as Mrs Rose is an industrious & hardworking woman'. However, the Roses were sent to Coranderrk.

In November 1912 Henry Rose wrote to the Board asking for land at Purnim to make a home for himself and family. Mr Robarts, manager at Coranderrk, supported Henry's request as Henry and his family had been well behaved at Coranderrk. The Board considered it undesirable for the Rose family to return to Purnim but Henry was determined to live in the Warrnambool region and the Board granted passes for the Rose family to go back to Purnim in April 1913. Although the Rose family returned, they again faced great difficulties.

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
29 January, 1917¹²⁹*

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to ask the Board if they would allow my boy James Rose an order to see Dr Henderson. he had been ill in Deniliquin hospital for ten weeks with meningitis & he is quite well again but has a very bad arm not able to do anything much with it & as he has to go back in March to his work I want it to get attended to at once if they would allow him to be under Dr Henderson as long as it is no better....I remain

yours truly
Amelia Rose

Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mrs Galbraith, matron, Lake Condah, 1917¹³⁰

Dear Mrs Galbraith

Just a few lines hoping they will find you all well as I am glad to say we are all the same[;] you will be surprised to get a letter from me but I am writing to ask you if its possible to get Adelaide Austin shifted from hear[;] when Jimmy was home she was stringing him after her that I was real glad when Lizzie sent for him as you cant always keep your eyes on boys & she is a lot older than Jim that I was very vexed to think that she would give him encouragement to go after her. now I have another boy older than Jim & she has him on the same game so I think if that is all she is loafing about here for the sooner she shifts the better or else Ill write to the Board & ask them why is a big strong girl allowed to live up here & do no work[;] only a snare for young fellows[.] I hope Mrs Galbraith you wont be vexed at me for writing to you but she must go out of here. with kind regards to you hoping you will see about it & let me know

I remain yours truly
Amelia Rose

Janet Turner

*Jeanette Turner, Lindenow Rly Stn, to Mr Callaway, Vice Chairman, 16
February, 1913¹³¹*

Dear Sir

I am writing to you asking if you will kindly oblige me in asking for permission for myself and children to live here with my brother as I find that the place suits my health.

Trusting you will kindly oblige[.] I will close my letter thanking the Board very much for all that they have done for me and hoping they will grant my request.

I am

yours respectfully
Jeanette Turner

Ditchburn asked Rev. Stähle's opinion. Stähle replied that 'I beg to state that it is not advisable for her children's sake that her request should be granted.'

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Janet Turner, Lindenow South,
24 February, 1913¹³²*

Memo,

Your letter asking permission for yourself and children to live with your brother Donald Creedie at Lindenow, has been considered and I am directed to state that the Board think it better you should return to Lake Condah Station for the sake of your children.

I enclose herewith an order for railway tickets to return to Milltown. You should hand it to the Station master at Lindenow.

*Jeanette Turner, Lindenow Rly Stn, S. Gippsland, to Mr Ditchburn,
Secretary, BPA, 4 March, 1913¹³³*

Dear Sir,

I am now writng to ask you if you would kindly oblige me by sending some money to pay for my bedding & lunch & cab and also if you would please get one of the Army Lassies to meet me in Melbourne on Monday night.

So please write back and let me know by this week, so trusting you will kindly oblige me.

I am

yours truly

Jeanette Turner

*Janet Turner, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary BPA,
15 July, 1916¹³⁴*

Dear Sir

Will you grant me a pass to Lake Tyers for me. I and my only son 17 years of age would like to live over there. am much over 60 years and my health is failing much and my to married daughters are there. please do not part me from my only son. My baby he is. I never gave any trouble to the managers wives[;] they all like me. I want to live the rest of my life by my daughters. I take my son & we will all be together. partings are cruel to old people

yours truly

Janet Turner

Mr Ditchburn forwarded Janet's letter to Mr Galbraith, the manager at Lake Condah, for his opinion. Mr Galbraith wrote: 'Janet Turner has been anxious to get to Lake Tyers for some considerable time: she also wishes her son to go as she would like to be near her daughters in her old age. Otherwise she is alright here, & a woman that never gives any trouble.' Ditchburn then asked Mr Greene at Lake Tyers whether there

was room there for the Turners. Greene replied that there was plenty of accommodation at Lake Tyers. Ditchburn recommended on 9 August that the request be refused as it would cost too much to transfer the Turners. The matter was deferred for the moment. Later that month Ditchburn received a letter from Mr Greene at Lake Tyers informing him that Janet's daughter Maggie Mobourne was very ill. On receipt of Greene's letter Ditchburn noted 'In view of the condition of Mrs Mobourne and the desire of Mrs Turner to be near her daughter I recommend that the request be granted and passes allowed.'

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah,
31 August, 1916*¹³⁵

Sir

Adverting to my letter of the 9th instant, I have now to state that Ernest Mobourne desires Mrs Turner and her son, to go to Lake Tyers in order that she may help him attending to his wife (Maggie Mobourne). The request has been granted and it is advisable that they should go as soon as possible. I enclose requisitions for railway tickets to Nowa Nowa.

Janet's daughter Maggie died at Lake Tyers in May 1917. Janet then returned to Lake Condah with her son.¹³⁶

Julia Russell

*Julia Russell, Coranderrk, to BPA, 29 September, 1913*¹³⁷

Dear Sirs

I am writing to ask permission if I could be allowed to adopt an infant child 12 days old. As the father of the child is a relative of my husbands[.] As I have no child of my own. Trusting that it will be granted.

I am
yours truly
Mrs Russell

The father of the child was Fred Hunter and the mother was Emma Patterson. The Board decided that the request could not be granted because the child in question was 'almost white', and therefore did not come within the power of the Board.

Maud Mullett

In August 1913 Maud's brother-in-law Alex, living at Coranderrk, sought the BPA's permission for Maud and David Mullett and their children to visit the station for three weeks. Mr Ditchburn wrote to the manager of Coranderrk: 'David Mullett and his family are half castes and have been away from the station for some time. They have been living at Cunninghame for a time and are quite aware of the rules

relating to visiting the stations. As they do not bear good reputations it would be advisable to discourage them from coming to Healesville, particularly as Jim Mullett and his family are at Coranderrk. The presence of these people would probably give you endless trouble.' On 30 August Mr Robarts wrote to the Board saying that David Mullett and family had arrived and as he told them that they could not stay on the station without the consent of the Board they had camped outside the reserve. He thought it best to give them permission to stay for two weeks at Coranderrk otherwise they would be an annoyance coming in and out of the station. This was approved on the condition that they left after two weeks.

*Maud Mullett, Badger Creek, to the BPA, 27 September, 1913*¹³⁸

Dear Sir,

I am writing to ask for permission for myself husband & brother in law J Mullett to visit Coranderrk once a week. My husband has two married brothers living at Coranderrk, and we would like to visit them sometimes[;] also I myself have relations there and would be very grateful for permission to visit them. I have a family of three, the eldest is 8 1/2 yrs old: trusting for a favourable reply,

I am
yours most respectfully
M. E. Mullett

Mr Robarts added a note: 'The Mullett family are remaining in this district until after Xmas when they intend leaving. I have no objection to the application being granted so long as they give no trouble. I would suggest that Sundays be the day for them to visit, when they can spend the day with their relatives as well as attend church.' The Board approved the application.

Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, memo to Mr Crawford, manager, Lake Condah, 2 April, 1914

An application has been made by Mrs Maud Mullett daughter of Mrs Emily Stephens for permission to visit Lake Condah Station for three weeks to see her mother.

Will you please let me know as soon as possible, whether you have accommodation for her and two children, and if there is any objection to the request being granted

Mr Crawford replied that accommodation could be provided for Mrs Mullett and her two children in Emily Stephen's house for three weeks. He had no objection as long as Maud and Emily obeyed the rules of the station.

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Maud Mullett, Tarrawarra,
16 April, 1914*

Memo.

With reference to your personal request for permission to visit your mother at the Aboriginal Station, Lake Condah, I have no objection to your staying at the station for a period of three weeks, conditionally on you paying your travelling expenses to and from Milltown, and conforming to the rules of the station.

Agnes Carter

Agnes Carter, Lake Condah, to BPA, 13 December, 1913¹³⁹

Gentlemen

Would you kindly allow my son Harry Carter to come on a visit to spent Xmas with us, he has not been here for 2 years & I would be so pleased to have him with me for xmas & New Year. Trusting for a favourable reply

Yours Respectfully

Agnes Carter

Agnes' request was approved.

Mary McRae

*Mary McRae, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
August, 1914¹⁴⁰*

Dear Sir

I now take up my pen to write you these few lines as I am anxious to have my mother over here[;] we have permission from Mr and Mrs Crawford that mother could come and attend me as I am to be laid up next month & wish to have her here[;] besides there is a lot to be done & mother is so useful[.] I would like her to be with me untill I am over my trouble and now I am going to ask you if you could kindly grant mother a pass to come over here[.] This letter will go through Captain Crawford who will kindly forward it on to you[.] I thought I would explain the matter to you[;] besides it is not very easy for mother to pay her own fare[.] Mr Robart has allowed her to come but he would not trouble the Board for any pass

I will bring my letter to a close

With best regards

from your friend

Mary E McRae

Mary's mother Ellen Terrick was given a pass to travel to Condah.

*Mary McRae, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
14 September 1914¹⁴¹*

Dear Sir

I have the pleasure in writing you these few lines hoping this letter will find you in the best of health as it leaves my family the same at present. I am thanking you for kindly granting mother the pass for coming over here to attend me[.] I also thanked our master and mistress for their kindness for my mother's coming[;] they both have shown their sympathetic ways towards my husband and myself & willingly helped us[.] Alex is quite happy and contented here the same as I am[;] he is trying to please the Captain in every little way[;] his work has been satisfying to the Captain[;] we both are very fond of our new master & mistress[;] they have been very good and kind to us ever since we came. I think

Alex wishes to be

I will bring my letter to a close

remembered to you

from yours sincerely

Mary E McRae

Mary McRae, Lake Tyers, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 19 August, 1918¹⁴²

....Dearest Mrs Bon I have some very bad teeth which I would like to have out[.] I was telling Mr Ferguson about them[.] He says I can go into Cunninghame to have them taken out by the dentist[.] I have a young baby & I wanted to ask permission for my mother to come and mind the little baby as I will be suffering with my face. I want about 4[.] I saw Mr McAlister about them before I left[;] he...said he would give me an order to get them out in town[;] do you think I can have mother here[?] help me please[.] When we first came here before hand Mr McAlister was going to give mother & step father John Terrick who is your old friend a trip to Lake Tyers[;] it seems he wasn't too pleased with them & will not bother[;] it was a shame to disappoint old people like that[;] mother wanted to come badly with us when we left[.] Dearest Mrs Bon as you are a real true friend to us natives we know we can write to you & let you know anything we wish to by your orders[;] one does not know who to ask as Mr McAlister has told Alex & myself before I left anything we ask for must & will go through him so will I write to him & ask his permission[;] also I thought I would let you know before hand I don't want him to know that I have already written to you & asked you to help me about mother coming here because I know his ways[;] he gets very angry & will get on to me when he comes here. Mother could stay with us[;] do you think you could kindly see the Board & ask their permission as I do need mother's keep & I always had mother near me to help[.] I do hope and trust by God's Grace the Board will grant the permission for mother to come[;] try & come with the members please[;] all will be glad to see you

Elizabeth Jennings

In 1914 the BPA sanctioned the removal of Elizabeth Jennings' daughter Elsie from Lake Tyers to the Salvation Army Home in Brunswick.

Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home, Brunswick, 8 October, 1914¹⁴³

My dear daughter

Just a few lines to you hoping you are quite well[.] Well my dear daughter I could not answer your letter back at once because I wrote away to Mrs Bon about you but I never got an answer back yet so I thought I must write and let you know why I kept you long waiting[.] To let you know that I am only just waiting to see what Mrs Bon says[;] if she dont satisfy us dont be surprise to see your Grandpa there[;] he said if he got to go to the Governor about it you will be coming home with him so dont get excited that will be next week or a week after[.] because you was in there long enough[;] you never did no harm[;] thats all I am telling you[;] Auntie Rose got a baby girl[;] Auntie Martha lost her little baby boy[;] Auntie Bella lost the twins[;] Sussie Murray shes dead[;] we are all quite well[;] Earnest Mouburn & Ethel they are here[.] Grandma & Grandpa send they love & kisses & also Dad & I myself send our love to you[;] so thats all my dear Daughter[.] So dont fret till you see your Grandpa[.] I am yours truly

mother E. Jennings

Elsie never received her mother's letter because the Matron of the Home intercepted it and sent it to the BPA. Mr Ditchburn thought it would be wrong to give the letter to Elsie and sent it back to the manager of Lake Tyers for his perusal.

Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary, 12 October, 1914¹⁴⁴

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to let you know that I am troubled about my Daughter Elsie Barrett[.] The reason why I am troubled about her because she wrote home to me saying that she was tired of being there not only that I am not too well myself[.] So I would like you to get her home for me[.] Please Mr J. Murray because I would like to see her home again with me[;] my only Daughter[.] If not will you grant me a passe to go & see her[.] Please Mr J. Murray because I seen Captain Howe about it and he told us to ask your permission[.] So I think it would be better to send her home to me[.] Please Mr J. Murray I wrote to Mrs Bon fortnight ago about the same thing to ask you for your help too to get her home but she never answered my letter[;] thats why I am just worrying about[.] Love to you & Mrs Bon.

hoping you will forgive her & get her home to me because I will be pleased to see her

So thats all I got to say to you Dear friend Mr J. Murray

Please write back and let me know at once

Elizabeth Jennings

Mr Ditchburn informed Elizabeth that the Matron reported that Elsie was very happy and contented and therefore her request would not be granted at present.

*Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
17 November, 1914¹⁴⁵*

Dear Sir

I'll take the pen to write you these few lines to let you know that I am going down to see my daughter[.] I would like to know how is it that you did not give me permission little sooner[.] Its all very well to say that she is happy and contented there but I'm not because I dont get letters for months[.] I'm the mother[.] I reared her up and I ought to get letters from her[.] Is that a prison I would like to know[?] Now that I am going down now to see into matters but I wont go to see you about it[.] I am going some where else because you would not give me no satisfaction[.] We not slaves or prisoners of war to be treated like that[.] How would you like to be in the same place as I am[?] you would feel it[.] You never let me know nor even Captain Howe how long you going to keep her in the Home[;] that would be some satisfaction to me but I am going to see now and my sister I got friends there in Melbourne that will help me to see into matters[.] I ask for a passe but you would not grant it and therefore I am going to pay my fares down so dont be surprise to see me there[.] So that is all I got to say to you

hoping that you will take
it and consider the matter

I am yours

Elizabeth Jennings

The Secretary sent the Matron of the Home a letter asking her why it was that Mrs Jennings wasn't receiving letters from Elsie. The Matron wrote back saying she did not know because Elsie had been writing and letters had been posted.

*Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home,
Brunswick, 14 January, 1915¹⁴⁶*

Dear Daughter

Just a few lines to you to tell you that we had a lot of white peoples here[;] they were all nice peoples[;] we all went into the church and sang for them and when we came out we saw a gentleman talking to Thomas Scott and I told grandpa to see him and grandpa went up to

him and ask him if he can do a favour for us and he said he will when he get back to Melbourne[;] and he asked what was your name and he put your name down on his book and he's going to see you when he gets home[;] he is living in Brunswick[;] so when he ask you if you want to come home you say yes and when he gets you out you thank him for it because he said that he will see Mr Snowball about it[.] So when he comes you get ready because he said Mr Snowball is next to the Governor[;]

we told him you age & he said that you too old to be in there[;] he was real well[;] so thats all I got to say

yours truly mother
E. Jennings

Again, this letter did not reach Elsie because the Matron of the Home read it and sent it to the BPA, saying she thought it unwise to give the letter to Elsie. The Secretary agreed, and retained the letter.

*Lizzie Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary,
20 July, 1915¹⁴⁷*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to you to ask you about my daughter Elsie Barrett[.] I would like to know how long is she's going to be in the Homes[;] she was in there now 12th months from July last year to this July[.] I think that she's well punish for what shes done[;] all through Annie Harrison dragging her about[.] The Order in Council was stated that Elsie was to go to the Homes and Annie Harrison was to be bound on the Station never to put her foot of the station[.] Well that was never carried out[.] Annie Harrison she's got her liberty here running about here, going to Cunninghame with the [?] rest of the people enjoying her self[;] is it fair for Elsie to bear all the punishment, she's up in that Homes for the sake of other girls[.]

Will you kindly oblige me in helping me to try & get her out of the Homes[.] I know its in your power and therefore I am asking you

Hoping that you
will grant my
request

I am yours
Mrs Lizzie Jennings

Please reply to this letter

*Lizzy Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary,
20 September, 1915¹⁴⁸*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to you to let you know that I got your letter and I was not satisfied[,] so I showed the letter to Mr Green the Manager and also Elsie's letter and he wrote to Mr Ditchburn to ask him to let her

come home[;] not only that Mr Green sent Elsie's letter too so as Mr Ditchburn will know how she's behaving herself[.] Since Mr Green wrote to Mr Ditchburn and showed Elsie's letter I never got any letters since from her, before that I used to get letters every fortnight. Now I would like to know the reason why I dont get letters[.] Did Mr Ditchburn ever spoke to you about the letters[?] it was six weeks ago since because we asked Mr Green if he got answer yet he said he never got word yet[.] Please Mr Murray will you kindly let her come home to me because I am fretting for she's being the only daughter and therefore I am asking you because its in your power[.] So thats all I got to say[;] hoping that you will grant my request

I am yours Mrs Lizzy Jennings

Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home, Brunswick, 31 October, 1915¹⁴⁹

My dear daughter

I received your letter last night after we came home from fishing and I was very glad to get it because only yesterday I was telling Dad that I ought to get a letter from you[;] to tell you that Grandpa is working over at Dobbie and he is there in Melbourne as soon as he comes home[.] Grandpa will send you the money[;] he is got some now what he made out of baskets so you will get it soon[.] Dear daughter grandpa was speaking to a Solicitor other day about you and he told Grandpa to tell me to write to Mr Blackburn the Solicitor[;] he do it for me[;] so I did[.] I will be expecting a letter from him next week so I think I will have you home for xmas[;] so that is all the news I got to tell you...dear[;] dont worry over it I will have you home some[;] our manager Mr. Green he will be going to Melbourne next week[.] I will tell him too to see about you while he is there because he is going to the meeting[.] So thats all I got to say to you dear daughter

yours truly Elizabeth Jennings

Once again, the Matron of the Home read Elizabeth's letter and sent it to the Secretary of the BPA, stating that she did not think it wise to give Elsie the letter. The Secretary thanked her, saying that the letter certainly should not be given to Elsie; it would remain in the BPA office.

Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Cameron, BPA, 21 November, 1915¹⁵⁰

Dear Sir

I'll take the pen to write you these few lines to you hoping it will find you and to ask you would you kindly do me a favour to get my daughter Elsie Barrett home[;] she's in the Harbour Home Union Street Brunswick[;] she was in there for this seventeen months[;] to let you know how it was it was through Annie Harrison taking her across the Lake for company's sake and she had to be taken for that and Annie

had to stay[.] Is it fair for her to be kept in that long for another girls sake and she's running about here[?] yet I think it is time for her to be home with me because shes the only one daughter I got and I do miss her[.] I always think abut her[;] not only that I am a sickly woman[.] I wrote to Mr Blackburn and I got an answer back[;] he told me to ask you if you can do it for me[.] So try and do the best if you can for me because I would like to have her home for xmas[;] no more to say

So thats all for the present

Yours truly Elizabeth Jennings

Please reply back

Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Cameron, BPA, December, 1915¹⁵¹

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to ask you if that is your answer to my letter which I have written to you[.] It seems like if the letter was passed on to me from Mr Green the Manager's letter which Mr Ditchburn wrote to him thats why I am sending the letter back to you[.] I cant understand it because it has no stamps on it[;] to tell you that I was going to take it up as see you about it and also a xmas box for you & Mrs Cameron but Mr Green would not allow us to go[;] but I can send it up by next Friday to Mrs Cameron[.] Dear Sir I am real disappointed about my daughter Elsie the only girl I got not home to have xmas with me[.] I would really like her to be home as same as a white mother would feel if they was in my place[.] I am just worrying my head over her now because xmas day is near[.] So I would like you to do your best[.] So thats all I got to say

Yours truly Elizabeth Jennings

Please reply at once to soothe my mind

Mr Cameron forwarded this letter to Mr Ditchburn who replied to him 'Allow me to say that the girl's best interests are not the chief concern of this woman and consequently it would be inadvisable to do anything which would again place the girl under her control, at any rate for the present.'

*Lizzie Jennings, Lake Tyers, to the Governor of Victoria,
1 February, 1916¹⁵²*

To His Excellency

Sir Arthur Stanley, K.C.M.G.

My object in asking you is your Excellency I would like if you will kindly assist me in getting my daughter Elsie Barrett back to Lake Tyers who is in the Home of the Salvation Army at the present[;] and I written to different members of the State but the Board would not grant it[;] so I am appealing to you for your help as

she has been long enough away from us
Trusting you will kindly grant my request
I am sir
your obedient
servant
Lizzie Jennings

The Governor forwarded Lizzie's letter to the BPA. Ditchburn wrote to Mr Green at Lake Tyers that it would be best to 'console' Mrs Jennings as much as possible to the fact of Elsie's remaining at the Home.

*Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home,
East Brunswick, February, 1916¹⁵³*

My dear daughter

Just a few lines to you to let you know that I got your letter and was glad to get it but I am sorry to say that I kept you waiting for an answer[;] the reason why I wrote to the Governor and I was waiting for his word but I never got any yet[;] you might be surprise some days yet if not you might see Grandpa there[;] he is mad to go because he is got the money yet he is only waiting for this week and he will go the next week[.] Mr dear daughter I suppose you have heard about Jacob Harrison[;] he is dead and Ada she is acting as a young girl no feeling[;] we are all quite well & I and dad & Grandpa & Grandma[.] Henry Thorpe is going to the war & Herbert Murray & Willie Murray and I suppose you heard about David Mullett[.] So that is all I got to say dear daughter

yours truly mother
E. Jennings

All the people are quite well at present[.] Granny Nellie & Granny Kitty they both send their best love & kisses to you[;] so good night till I see you

*Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home,
East Brunswick, 28 February, 1916¹⁵⁴*

Dear daughter

Just a few lines to you hoping it will find you in good health and also to ask you why the reason that you never answered me & Grandpa letter[;] we are watching for a letter every day[.] I and Grandma we always go out fishing every morning about day-light and we bring a lot of brims and also leather jackets[;] theres plenty of fishes[.] Pearly was here[;] she was asking about you[;] she missed you and she was real sorry and I think Auntie Rose & uncle Ted & the girls they are all coming back again[.] I would like to know the reason why you dont write to us but never mind your dear old Grandpa will be there on Thursday[;] you will see him in the morning or in the afternoon[;] he is going to make a start tomorrow[;] he is real anxious to

go this time[;] now dont forget you watch for him Thursday[.] So thats all I got

to say to you
yours truly mother

E. Jennings

*Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home,
East Brunswick, 3 March, 1916¹⁵⁵*

Dear daughter

Just a few lines to you to tell you that Grandpa never went on account of the rain that we had here & he was to go this Monday but he cant now[.] To let you know the reason why because we saw two members Mr Hutchison & Mr Reed[;] we told them about you & they said that they will see about it on Wednesday's Meeting that told Grandpa that they will have you out[;] now when they go & see you will you kindly ask them to help you & get you home[;] dont be such a fool to ask them to buy you this & that like you did when Mr Ditchburn ask you what can he do for you[;] if they ask you that question tell them that you want to come home[;] that is if they go & see you because they ask what home was you in & we told them the Harbour Home Union Street Brunswick & they ask what your name & how old you are & what colour we told them that you was a pure black girl[;] so I think that you will be home next week[;] so that is all I got to tell you

Yours truly mother

Elizabeth Jennings

*Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr McLeod, Chief Secretary, 3 March,
1916¹⁵⁶*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to you to ask you to do me a favour in trying again to get my daughter Elsie Barrett back again to Lake Tyers[;] would you kindly put it before the meeting next Wednesday 8th[.] The Grandfather of Elsie saw Mr Hutchison and Mr Reed and they said they would do all they could to get her back[.]

The reason why I am asking you because shes been too long away from me and I would like her to be home[.] I got letters from her saying that shes sick & tired of the place because its just like a prison[;] we cant go and see her any time because Mr Ditchburn wont allow any of her friends to go and visit her[;] is it right or not[?]

So thats all I got to say hoping that you will grant my request

I am yours

E. Jennings

On 17 March Mr Ditchburn visited Elsie at the Home. He reported back to the Board that 'At times she appeared a little depressed but soon recovered. She was well cared for and was occasionally taken to the city

and around the suburbs, as well as the St. Kilda beach. She was in excellent health and performed her work satisfactorily. The Matron handed me three letters written by Mrs E. Jennings to Elsie Barratt, but which had not been given to the girl'. Ditchburn stated that Elsie did not want to return to Lake Tyers but preferred to go to Coranderrk or into service.

Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mr Greene, acting manager, Lake Tyers, 21 March, 1916¹⁵⁷

Sir,

With reference to previous correspondence relative to the girl Elsie Barratt, I have now to inform you that certain letters addressed by Mrs E. Jennings to the girl have been handed to me by the matron of the Salvation Army Home, Brunswick, as they were likely to upset the girl's happy condition and make her discontented with her surroundings. Such communications will not be handed to her, and in future all letters intended for her should be handed to you for perusal and despatch to the girl.

I am directed to request that you will inform Mrs Jennings that all letters intended for Elsie Barratt must be handed to you for perusal and despatch, and that no communications which would be likely to unsettle her will be permitted to reach her

Yours faithfully
Secretary

Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 30 April, 1916¹⁵⁸

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to you to ask you to do me a favour that is about my daughter Elsie Barrett who is now in the Homes at Brunswick[;] shes been there for two years and I think its time she ought to be home because she will be over her age next month[;] will you kindly ask the under-Secretary Mr W. A. Callaway to see into matters because I would like to see her home because shes the only daughter I got

Trusting that you will
do me the favour
I am yours
Elizabeth Jennings

*Lizzie & Isaac Jennings and A & C Chase, Lake Tyers, to the BPA,
6 August, 1916¹⁵⁹*

Gentlemen,

Sirs

We the undersigned parents and grandparents of Elsie Barrett ask you to take into consideration our applications on her behalf in permitting her to return home to us[.] She has been away from us for about three years. So Sirs we trust you will oblige us in paying attention to our request[;]

her age is 19

We remain Gentlemen

Your humble servants

Lizzie Jennings}	parents
Isaac Jennings	
A Chase}	grandparents
C Chase	

The Jennings and the Chases sent another petition of the same wording to Mrs Bon on 8 August.

*Lizzie Jennings & others, Lake Tyers, to Mr Cameron, BPA, November,
1916¹⁶⁰*

Dear Sir

We the aboriginal and residents of Lake Tyers request you to beg the Board to allow Elsie Barrett to return home again to her parents and grandparents, & oblige yours faithfully We the Aborigines

Signatures

Isaac Jennings}	parents	Kitty Johnson
Lizzy Jennings		Nellie Blair
A Chase		Cornelius Edwards
C Chase		Ada Harrison
W Johnson		Stewart Hood
M Johnson		Florence Moffatt
C Green		W Edwards
L. Green		E Edwards
L Moffatt		Gracie Edwards
A. W. Hayes		Violet Johnson
Mr & Mrs W. Hayes		James ORourke
E. Mobourne		
Ethel Mobourne		
Henry, Thom Scott		

Mr Cameron forwarded the petition to the Secretary who replied that the Board had decided that in the best interests of Elsie she would remain 'under the protecting care of the Salvation Army authorities'

*Lizzie Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Bowser, BPA, 15 May, 1917*¹⁶¹

Sir

May I implore of you, Sir if you will kindly maintain my desires as regarding my daughter Elsie Barrett who was dismissed from here to the homes & has been for 3 years & a half there & I would like very much if you will kindly assist me by permitting my daughter to be home here again[.] I would be too thankful if you would kindly grant my request today as I would like to know[.] Sir I think that her time is pretty well expired from the time of her age, she was about 17 years of age when she was taken to the Homes[;] so I will leave that for you to anticipate

Yours

Lizzie Jennings

*Elizabeth Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr McLeod, Chief Secretary,
16 October, 1917*¹⁶²

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to you in asking you to do me a favour[.] I would like you to do all you can for me to get my daughter Elsie Barratt home[.] I think its time that she should be out[;] shes be in for 3 years 3 months[;] shes over age[.] I am longing to see her home again and shes longing to see me too and therefore I am asking you for you help[;] please Mr McLeod do it as a kind friend[;] so thats all I got to say to you

yours

Elizabeth Jennings

So be sure and answer at once

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs E. Jennings, Lake Tyers,
24 October, 1917*¹⁶³

Memo/

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant addressed to the Hon the Chief Secretary, asking that your daughter Elsie Barrett be allowed to return from the Salvation Army Harbour at East Brunswick, and in reply am directed to state that after fully enquiry into the case the Chief Secretary does not consider it advisable for the sake of the girl that she should be allowed to return home to Lake Tyers.

Secretary

At a special meeting of the BPA held at Lake Tyers on 18 May, 1918, the Chief Secretary read out a letter written by Mrs Jennings asking that her daughter Elsie Barrett be allowed to return to the station. A

motion was carried that Mrs Bon should arrange through the Neglected Children's Department to interview Elsie and the Salvation Army authorities and to report back to the Board.¹⁶⁴ Mrs Bon did so and reported that Elsie was happy and clean. Mrs Bon urged that Lizzie be allowed to visit Elsie at the Home. The Board decided at another meeting on 28 May, 1918 that Elsie would stay where she was and that the question of Lizzie's visit could be considered later.

*E. Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mrs Bon, Member, BPA, August, 1918*¹⁶⁵

Dear Madam

Just a few lines to you hoping this letter will find you in the best of health as it leaves me here with a very bad cold[.] Mr dear friend the reason why I am writing this letter to you I would like you to grant me the passe that you promised me[.] I would like to go by next month Please because I am real anxious to go and see her My dear friend and another thing is it will be lonely for me to travel by myself[.] Mrs McDougal like to come with me so I would like you to pass her through too[.] I will be very pleased so thats all go to say

I am yours sincerely friend

E. Jennings

Lizzie visited Elsie at the Home in Brunswick for four days during September 1918.

*Lizzy Jennings, Lake Tyers, to the Matron, Salvation Army Home, Brunswick, 31 July, 1919*¹⁶⁶

Dear Madam

Just a few lines to you to let you know that I and my husband are both not to good and I would like to have Elsie home with me in case anything happen to her father[;] will you kindly see and forward her home to me please

yours truly

Lizzy Jennings

*Lizzy Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home, Brunswick, 31 July, 1919*¹⁶⁷

My dear daughter

Just a few lines to you hoping this letter will find you quite well as it leave me and dad sickly[;] dear Elsie dad is very bad[;] his been in bed for a week and he likes to see you very badly before anything happens to him and also I am not to good myself[.] I am very bad in the kidneys[.] I want you to be home now for my help[;] sometimes I got to leave my house dirty[;] aunt Rose do it for me but shes not able to do it always[;] so ask the darling of yours

and the Ensign what they think of it
So thats all I got to say
yours truly mother
Lizzy Jennings

*Lizzie Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
31 July, 1919¹⁶⁸*

Sir

May I be privileged of conveying a few lines also kindly asking the Aboriginal Board to be very approaching accordingly, to my request and my only wish[.] Sir I am very anxious for my daughter Elsie Barrett[.] I would kindly implore of the Board to permit my daughter to come home again[.] Sir I have consulted Mr Ferguson so he advises me to forward my statements to the Board[.] I would be very thankful to the Board to grant my only wish to let me have my daughter home again[.] I Remain yours

truly
Lizzie Jennings

Mr Ferguson, manager of Lake Tyers, forwarded the above letter with his own comment: 'Can arrangements be made for Elsie Barrett to come home on a visit? Her stepfather (Isaac Jennings) has not been very well, and is improving slowly. He is able to walk about, but has to be careful of cold, to which he is subject. I don't think he will ever be strong again'.

*Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Mr Ferguson, manager, Lake Tyers,
18 September, 1919¹⁶⁹*

Sir,

I have to inform you that Mrs Bon has visited Elsie Barrett at the Salvation Army Refuge, E. Brunswick. The Girl is happy and unwilling to leave that Institution. I have by direction therefore to state that it is considered that the suggested visit to Lake Tyers is undesirable

Yours faithfully,

Secretary

*Lizzy Jennings, Lake Tyers, to Elsie Barrett, Salvation Army Home,
Brunswick, 29 January, 1920¹⁷⁰*

My dear daughter

Just a few lines to you to let you know that I got your letter and was glad to get an answer[.] Dear Elsie let me tell you that you got to wait a long time before you can get money from us because Dad is not working now on account of me[;] my heart is very weak and he got to be home with me to do the cooking & the house

work because I havent to do anything & also a weak stomach and I think you ought to be home for this work[;] you your own boss now[;] you are over age[;] you can walk clean out of the home[;] as long as you stay there I wont write anymore letters to you[.] I will leave Lake Tyers & go to New South Wales & die over there because you wont try & ask Mrs Bonn[;] thay cant keep you there altogether[.] Kate & Rhoda & Minna they are coming home in 6 month time[;] they at Buynip near Warragull and you going to be stuck in that place[;] no more to say yours truly mother

Lizzy Jennings

Harriet King

In April 1915 Harriet King decided to look after the child Nansen Young whose mother had recently died.

Harriet King, South Condah, Milltown, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 3 May, 1915¹⁷¹

Dear Mrs Bon

I am writing you these few lines hoping they will find you in good health as it leaves us here at present[.] Dear Mrs Bon we have just lost another of our dear friends at the mission a sufferer for years[;] the lord as taken her home where she will have no more pain & suffering[.] Poor Mrs Young left a little child 2 years old[.] I have almost had the child with me ever since its birth as the mother as been most of her time in the Hospital[.] Captain Crawford used to allow me rations for my attention to the child but he is gone now. The dying mother asked me if I would look after the child so of course I could not deny her her last request[;] she died a most peacefully death & I am sure as gone home to be with the lord[.]

Dear Mrs Bon would you kindly interview the board on my behalf & see if they will allow me rations for myself & the child[.] I do not want to take the child from the boards hands as he is a delicate little chapie & as his mother was a delicate woman[.] I do not know when he might need a doctor[.] I will do all I can to look after the child[;] all that a mother can do[;] as it was his mother last wish for me to look after him[.] But with this terrible war everything is so dear that we poor folks find it very hard to struggle along[;] so if I could be allowed to get the rations it would be a great help & it would be something for me for my care of the child whom I have had with me almost ever since he was 4 months old[;] so you will understand that the child looks to me as his mother[.] There are no relations of his fathers or mothers on the mission[.] So now dear Mrs Bon I will bring my note to a close with very kindest regards from Angus & myself

I remain

Yours respectfully

Harriet King

Harriet's request was approved by the Board.

In 1916 Harriet asked whether the Board would grant her some wire to fence her land. Mr W. P. Heathershaw visited Lake Condah to investigate. He reported to the Board that Harriet was a very respectable, intelligent, capable woman, but that, '[i]t is clear that Mrs King has no legal claim on the consideration of the Board, her slight moral claim rests on the fact that she is the widow of a half-caste, who at one time resided on the Station, but who, for 24 years of the last 26 years of his life, was in no way controlled by the Board.' Harriet had two horses, a cow and a buggy; her sole livelihood was part of her son's earnings and rations from the Station for the keep of Nansen Young. Mr Heathershaw did not think Harriet would be able to make use of the fenced land with her present resources.¹⁷²

In 1918, when Lake Condah station was in the process of being broken up, Harriet requested one of the cottages on the station. She wanted it so that she could look after two of the old women from the station. In May the BPA Secretary informed Mr Galbraith, manager of Lake Condah, that the Board had decided to grant Mrs King a spare cottage from the station for removal to her property. Mrs King would pay for the removal of the cottages.

Anne Bon, BPA, to Mr Bowser, Chief Secretary, 11 June, 1918¹⁷³

At our last meeting it was agreed that Mrs King should be granted a cottage to enable her to receive as boarders two very old women who will not leave Condah but wish to die there & be buried among their own kindred. It was never understood that Mrs King was to remove the house, or pay others to do so – it is the duty of the Manager to haul it to her selection & fix it up properly for the reception of the two [?] women. I would like to know by whose authority such an order should have been issued. Mrs King whose letter I enclose for your perusal is the widow of the eldest son of the late Chief of the Condah tribe. She is a most intelligent, well-conducted & [?] woman. She has one son & one daughter – the former works for farmers to help support the family & the girl has also been in service, which ought not to be poverty alone causing the mother to allow this. The husband showed independence of character in selecting land, wishing to have a home of his own, but it is poor land & the widow finds it hard to pay rents & c....

Mrs King has been most useful when on the Station acting as '[midwife?]' without pay – then 10/ each confinement was allowed & afterwards on my representation it was raised to 20/ but the doctor's fee would have been not less than £5.5.- probably £8.8.0.

She & her daughter did nearly all the milking last year for a miserable pittance thus saving Govt money grinding the poor[.]

Mr Campbell will confirm what I say re the King family. Angus the husband was a man held in respect & esteem by all who knew him. He was a great athlete & when he died, much was said of the said event in the local papers. And are we going to treat with cruel severity the widow & children of such a useful & good man?

It is a duty incumbent upon us to move the house for the benefit of the two old women. Why should poor Mrs King have to do it? It is simply preposterous but it is done without your knowledge & now you will issue proper orders for the benefit of all concerned.

Harriet King, Milltown, to Secretary, BPA, 20 June, 1918¹⁷⁴

Dear Sir

I write you these few lines to ask you if you will please remove the cottage on to my land which I am to have to enable me to look after the two old women from the mission station. I have no way or means of getting this cottage removed so will be much obliged to you if you get it done for me hoping you will be able to oblige

Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

The Secretary wrote to Mr Galbraith informing him that the grant of the cottage to Mrs King was in order to provide for the older residents who would be unwilling to transfer to Lake Tyers and to whom rations could be granted. He asked Galbraith to report as to whether the older people would be content with such an arrangement when the station was broken up and whether he had any means to move the cottage to Mrs King's property. Galbraith replied that the older residents did not wish to go to Mrs King's place.

Harriet King, The Forest, Sth Condah, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 1 July, 1919¹⁷⁵

Dear Sir

I write these few lines to ask you if you would please forward me some clothes for Nansen Young. The child I look after, you know, he is a very delicate little chap and he needs warm clothing.

He has only received one galeitia suit this year. Mrs Galbraith told me there was no clothing sent for him and he needs a warm suit, size 6, also shirts – flannels, socks & boots size 11 (eleven)[.] He is now six years old & I have never received a blanket for him so, I would be very thankful if you would send him some[.] Hoping you will be able to oblige,

I Remain Dear Sir
Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

The Board replied that if Harriet was unable to support Nansen he would be sent to Coranderrk to be with his father James Young and where he would be supported by the Board.

*Harriet King, The Forest, Sth Condah, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 17 July, 1919*¹⁷⁶

Dear Mrs Bon,

I am sending you a letter which I received from the Aboriginal Board[.] I wrote asking them to send me some clothes for Nansen Young and I also asked them to send him a blanket as he has not had a blanket from the Board since he has been with me, and, I have had him since he was four months old.

Dear Mrs Bon this child's father James Young who resides on the Coranderrk Stn has told me repeatedly that he will never take the child from me, as long as I am willing to keep him and, I assure you dear Mrs Bon it is not my wish to part with him, it would break me up very much to have to part with him[.] So I would be very thankful to you if you would give me some help in the matter[.] He is such a delicate little chappie, and, he needs with Gods help all the Mothers care that he can get[.] Hoping dear Mrs Bon that you are keeping well, with much love & kindest Regards from

yours sincerely
Harriet King

Mrs Bon wrote to Mr Campbell enclosing Harriet's letter above:

*Mrs Bon, BPA, to Mr Campbell, BPA, 31 July, 1919*¹⁷⁷

Dear Mr Campbell

The enclosed letter speaks for itself. Why harrass a poor respectable widow, the only mother the poor delicate boy has ever known by threatening them with separation?

Were the boy sent to his father at Coranderrk the Board would have to support him, as the father is not in a position to care for or provide for him, and he would be under the tender mercy of a step-mother who has a family of her own, and moreover is a good deal of her time in the town...The boy is happy and contented with his foster mother, who is training him in a proper manner as she is a Christian woman.

I hope you will kindly ask the Chief Secretary to allow the child to remain where he is and to see that he receives food & clothing....

Elizabeth Darby

Elizabeth married Frank Darby in May 1916. Within a few months of the marriage Frank began behaving violently towards her. On 18 August 1916 the manager of Lake Condah, Mr Galbraith, wrote to the Board regarding the way that Frank was treating Elizabeth and her son Freddy: 'This fellow is brutally cruel to Lizzie; he has threatened to cut her throat, & continually shouting at the top of his voice accusations against her. Several times he has told me that he will do something before he leaves here.' Galbraith also noted that Freddy Carmichael

had sustained burns to his legs and arms. The following day Elizabeth's uncle, Ted Mullett, also expressed his concern about her welfare:

*Ted Mullett, Purnim, to Mr Graham, Police Constable, Heywood,
19 August, 1916¹⁷⁸*

Dear Sir

I want you to go out to the Mission and see Frank Darby about knocking is Wife about[;] if it occur again I will come down and summon him as Galbraith don't see into the matter and speak to him about fighting Lizzie as I got full inform about him ill treating Lizzie[;] he as been ill treating the Baby[.] I got that against him ill treating the Baby so I like you to go and see Lizzie and her Husband[;] if Darby allow to do the ill treating Lizzie I soon get him up to court[;] hope you speak to him and if it occur again it will be a court case against him[;] give him one chance[;] if it occur I send word to you or else I come down myself and I get a summon out for him

I remain
yours faithfully
Ted Mullett

On 22 August Mr Galbraith sent a telegram to the Board stating that 'Darby will have to be removed immediately otherwise will not be responsible for actions.' The Board asked the police at Heywood to enquire into the reports about Frank ill-treating Lizzie and also arranged for a medical officer to inspect the child. The local policeman reported that he was unable to obtain enough evidence of the ill-treatment.¹⁷⁹ On 5 September Frank broke Lizzie's arm. Mr Galbraith stated that Lizzie was at first too frightened to say anything in front of Frank, and initially explained that a camp oven lid had fallen on her arm. Subsequently she admitted that Frank had hit her, and Frank was arrested and charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm on his wife. Galbraith advised the Board that 'From inquiries I find, that Darby when roused into a fit of passion, practically becomes insane, I would respectfully suggest that when he has served his term, that arrangement be made, that he be placed in a home of stricter supervision, as, if he is allowed to return and live with his wife, it is possible, he will have revenge, for the steps she has taken.' Frank was sentenced at the Heywood Court to one month's imprisonment, the charge having been reduced to one of assault. Meanwhile the Board sent a statutory declaration to the police at Hamilton with instructions that Frank must sign it before returning to Lake Condah. Frank signed the declaration which was an undertaking not to ill-treat his wife or stepson, and to obey the instructions of the manager. If he broke this promise he was to forego any claim to maintenance and support on any Aboriginal station. The Board's strategy failed, for on 1 January 1917 Galbraith wrote complaining of Frank's 'dastardly behaviour' towards Lizzie and Freddie. Frank had knocked Lizzie about most cruelly and

twisted Freddie's leg until it cracked. Galbraith suggested that Frank be removed from the station and Freddy placed in a home.

*Acting Secretary, BPA, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah,
3 January, 1917¹⁸⁰*

Sir

With reference to your letter of the 1st instant, relative to the conduct of Frank Darby, I have, by direction, to inform you that if Darby will not leave the Station the police should be instructed to arrest him for ill treating his wife and child.

Frank was subsequently arrested and sentenced to imprisonment for three months in the Ballarat Gaol. The Board then decided not to allow Frank back to Lake Condah as he had broken his promise. However in April 1917 Frank returned to the station and, with Lizzie and Freddie, left for Hamilton. There the police located them living with the Stephen family in Clark St. The police reported that 'Mrs Darby said her husband had treated her well since his release from gaol, and also her stepson [son]. They wanted to go to Coranderrk...Mrs Darby is greatly wrapped up in the stepson [son] and would not like to part with it.' In June 1917 Lizzie returned to Lake Condah with Freddie and her new baby because Frank was unable to support them. She planned to stay there until Frank was in a position to provide for them. Later that month however, Lizzie's baby daughter took ill and she took her to the Hamilton hospital, leaving Freddie at the mission.

*Lizzie Darby, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake
Condah, 7 July, 1917¹⁸¹*

Dear Sir

I am now writing to you to aske you if you would kindly arrange for me to get rations while here till baby is ready to go home. I go to see how she is nearly every day: she is improving slowly. I think she had to go under an operation to get an abcess lanced on the leg & then had to get her 2 feet lance. I first stayed at Mrs Fosters but she told me, that I could not stay there & that I was to find some where else to go to[;] now I am with Mrs Stephens & her Daughter till I go home so please would you kindly arrange for me to get Rations & also kindly answer at your convennence. My respects to Mrs Galbraith & yourself

yours respectfully
Lizzie Darby

add

c/o Mrs Stephen
6 Clark St
Hamilton

remember me my darling son I am longing to see his dear little face

Lizzie's daughter died on 18 July in the Hamilton Hospital.

*Lizzie Darby, Hamilton, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah,
26 July, 1917¹⁸²*

Dear Sir

Would you kindly let me come back for Fred. I would like to stay for a while in Hamilton[;] that if I ask your permission first[.] So if you could kindly let me come down for Fred[.] Suppose you & Mrs Galbraith heard about dear little Josephine[;] she died last Wed evening[.] I think that is all[;] my Respectfully to Mrs Galbraith & your self

I remain
yours truly
Lizzie Darby

Lizzie collected Freddie from Lake Condah on 6 August and returned to Hamilton. On 10 August Mr Ditchburn sent a memo to Lizzie informing her that the Board advised her to return home to Lake Condah. She could get a pass from the Superintendent of Police at Hamilton if she needed one.

*Lizzie Darby, Hamilton, to Mrs Galbraith, Lake Condah,
11 August, 1917¹⁸³*

Dearest Mrs Galbraith,

I am writing to you to let you know that we arrived here Friday night by the train[.] How his Mr Galbraith & Winnie & Leslie & Bobbie & all the people[.] I am quite happy[;] both I & Frank & dear little Freddie[;] its is very wet & miserable up here[.] I will be going to work this afternoon & Monday to wash. I think that is all just at present[.] So I think I must close with best respect to you & Mr Galbraith

yours respectfully
Lizzie Darby

Mr Galbraith informed the Board that he had told Lizzie to remain at the station but that 'she came & told me she was going back to Hamilton with Frank & that no one could prevent her, so I consented to her going as I knew she would clear out in any case'.¹⁸⁴

*Elizabeth Darby, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
7 September, 1917¹⁸⁵*

Dear Sir

Would you kindly let me have my supplies of rations please as I have left the Mission Station for good to try & bring my husband to be a better man[.] We just not long lost our little baby girl[;] she was just five month when she was called home[;] ever wife has feelings for their husband[;] he seems to have turned over a new leaf[;] why should my husband be kept of & there is one man who his on a different charge to

him he was taken to gaol twice & took his punishment like a man[.] why should the half cast be kept with rations & allowed to be on the station any time[.] Sir my husband was not allowed to come & see his dear little baby when she was ill[;] to tell you the truth manager & Misstress said that she only had the cold & then they let my husband come to see her when both her eyes were closed & now she is gone home to be with Jesus & all the angels[.] So kindly let me know at your convenes

Yours Respectfully
Elizabeth Darby

Elizabeth was informed by the Board that her husband should be able to earn enough money for her support. The Darbys returned to Lake Condah later that month. On 22 October Mr Galbraith wrote to the Board advising it to move Frank Darby off the station for the sake of his wife, stepson and peace for the other residents – 'His wife who is afraid of him has a good many bruises on her body undoubtedly caused by him[;] now she has a swollen knee & states it was caused by falling: in my opinion it has been caused by a severe wrench or blow. She will not impart any information while Darby is here as she is too afraid of the consequence.'

*Elizabeth Darby, Lake Condah, to Mr McLeod, Chief Secretary,
24 October, 1917*¹⁸⁶

Dear Sir

Would you kindly grant me & my husband a pass to Coranderk
Mission Stn to live as we both have relations there[.] I am not well at
times[.] We have just not long lost our darling little baby girl just 5 &
now we have only look above[.] As the Manager here is so good &
kind to us[.] I am writing through the Manager permission
as my husband as his mother
& sister & step father there

yours Respectfully
Elizabeth Darby

The Board refused Elizabeth's request, and instead arranged for an Order-in-Council to have the Darbys transferred to Lake Tyers in January 1918. In February 1919 the manager of Lake Tyers reported to the Board that Frank had been ill-treating Lizzie and had been imprisoned for a month.

*Elizabeth Darby, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
29 April, 1920*¹⁸⁷

Dear Sir

In regard to late John Dutton who statement I cannot give[;] also my eldest sister Nellie Ellen Carmichael Born at Lake Condah who Birth and Death I cannot give correct date[;] also my mother Born at Lake Condah and married at Lake Condah about years 1881 as near as I remember[;] myself was born at Lake Condah Elizabeth Hewitt Darby

my age 23 years about the year 1897[;] my sister Nellie Ellen Carmichael Born at Lake Condah Died at Coranderrk about the years 1884 near as I can give[;] please kindly give me correct Date of my sister & myself as I cannot remember when my sister & my mother[.] I was about 4 years old when my mother died[;] she died at Lake Condah about the years 1884[;] hope you oblige me

I remain your obedience servant
Elizabeth Hewitt Darby

Mr Parker replied that the BPA's records could not provide the information Elizabeth sought and that she should contact the Curator of Estates of Deceased Persons.

Frank Darby died in August 1920.

*Lizzie Darby, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
20 August, 1920¹⁸⁸*

Dear Sir

I received your letter of sympathy & thank you & the Board for your deepest sympathy in the death of my dear husband[.] He died a happy death[;] trusting in the dear Lord he is singing with the angels above[.] I have only to follow in his dear footsteps fighting faithfully under his banner as a true soldier & servant[;] with best respects

your respectfully
L. Darby

Elizabeth's ten month old son Thomas died in September 1920.

*Lizzie Darby, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
26 October, 1920¹⁸⁹*

Sir

May I have the pleasure of applying to the Board to be permitted to go to Coranderrk for a month and after my holidays is expired I will get my uncles to assist me home again[,] that is Dave Mullet & Alick Mullett[,] & also I will thank the Board if they will grant my request on my behalf

I remain yours truly
Lizzie Darby

The Board referred Lizzie's request to Mr Robarts. He did not think there was any need for Lizzie to have a holiday because she was in good health.

Dinah Young

Dinah Young, Coranderrk, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 6 September, 1916¹⁹⁰

Dear Mrs Bon

Just a few lines[.] I have been waiting very patiently for you to come to Melbourne to ask of you a favour[;]

poor old Granny White as asked me to take the children down to see her in every letter she has written to me & has she is not very well we would like to go down to Condah to see her as we have no money for our fare I would respectfully ask of you a pass for myself & husband also the three children[.]

We are all well on the station at present[;] everything is going on nicely[;] we have our prayer meetings twice a week in the church[;]

trusting this will find you well I remain Dear

Mrs Bon yours very
sincerely Dinah Young

Mr Ditchburn recommended that the request be refused because it was not an urgent case. Mr Robarts did not see the necessity for all the members of the family to go. In the end however, Dinah and her family left to visit Lake Condah.

Emily Stephen

Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 24 October, 1916¹⁹¹

Dear Sir

In answer to your letter, the measurements are correct. I was coming tomorrow to tell you & to also remind you of the permit to visit L. Tyers. But this afternoon after 4 o'clock I received a telegram to hasten back at once as Blanche's baby is very ill: the Doctor vaccinated baby while she had a cold & they told him but he did it all the same & baby is very ill & my daughter wishes me home at once & so I am returning by the morning train[.] Would you kindly forward the belt to Hamilton[.] With many thanks for your kindness

I am yours
respectfully
Emily M. Stephen

E. Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, February, 1917¹⁹²

Dear Sir,

Would you kindly place before the Members of the Board Polly Stephen's request asking for permission for herself & children to go on Lake Condah Mission Station for a month or two as the 2 children Gason & Mary had been seriously ill in the Hospital here with

Bronchial Pneumonia[;] in fact the little girl was so ill that the Doctor gave her up but she rallied round & Polly herself has not been too well[;] a change would really do them good. Dear Sir do use your influence on their behalf & in doing so you will be doing a kind action & a great favour for me & it will relieve my mind because I know it will do them good. I leave it all with you, because in your hands I know the request is safe because I myself[?] have proved your kindness towards us: do your best for them. I will be anxiously waiting reply.

I remain yours respectfully

E. Stephen

In November 1917, Alfred Stephen, Emily's son, wrote to the Board asking for two months of rations for himself and Emily because he was ill and unable to work at the time. The Board refused because it was advised by the local constable at Hamilton that Alfred was not so ill and should be able to find work in the district. The constable stated that the Stephens, and the Coombes who were living with them, could afford drink but apparently did not wish to buy food.¹⁹³

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
26 January, 1918¹⁹⁴*

Dear Sir

I am writing on behalf of my son Alfred Stephen, who has recently come out of the Hamilton Hospital having gone under a serious operation for Pendicitis. I am asking you if you would kindly ask the Members of the B. P. Abg to grant him & his wife permission to go on to L. Tyers Mission Station for a while until he regains strength to resume work; the change would be beneficial to him as I am not in a position to do much for him & the change would do both him & his wife good. When he asked for help of the Board in November he had dry pleursy but it seems he was also sickening for Pendicitis, the Doctor removed his Appendix. it was in a very bad condition so the Doctor told me. I asked Dr Laidlaw to write that the Board may see the need of Alfred's request. Trusting dear sir to have a favourable reply & Alfred's request be granted[.] At present we seem to have a lot of trouble in one way or the other, my son-in-law Connie Coombs just came home Saturday from the Hospital[;] he was in for ten days with Gastritis & my son Bert's little baby son is not expected to live[;] a while back his other 2 children Gason & Mary has been in the Hospital. Mary in November & Gason 3 weeks before Xmas, so you see it is pretty at present with us. Alfred only came out of Hospital last Monday went in 6th December. So dear Sir would you kindly use your influence on our behalf. it will be a great kindness

I will now close with kind respects

yours respectfully

Emily M. Stephen

The Board did not grant Emily's request that Alfred and his wife Evelyn be allowed to go to Lake Tyers, but it granted rations to them for three months.

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
10 July, 1918¹⁹⁵*

Dear Sir

My daughter-in-law Polly Stephen asked me if I would write to you for her requesting if you would ask the Members if they would kindly supply her with rations for herself & little girl as she has only come out of the Hospital a little while back & is not able to go to work yet. her husband my son Bertie about a fortnight ago went into the Hospital very ill (with his kidneys)[;] on Sunday when we went to see him he looked a little better & his wife she is really not able to go out yet till the summer comes on, she was in the hospital when their little son Gason died, so dear Sir if you would kindly use your influence on their behalf I would be so grateful

with respects

yrs respectfully

E. M. Stephen

The Board granted Polly Stephen rations for three months.

Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 22 May, 1919¹⁹⁶

Dear Sir

In reply to your letter wishing to know where Maud Mullett is[;] at present she is living with her brother Bert & his wife in Hamilton[.] When Maud came from Melbourne she was far from well, she had a large carbuncle under her arm & a boil on her side. I took her to the doctor & he ordered her into the Hospital. I left Hamilton in March to come here. Blanche & her husband came here a week before me. I suppose Maud will remain with Bert till they remove down here when Bert's wife will be stronger after her confinement[;] she has a baby girl born last week[;] little Mary quite well. Work is slack at present in Hamilton & Bert finds it hard to get any employment, perhaps he may do better when he comes down here. Dear Sir I am going to intercede on his behalf (What they would have done had it not been for that order from the Board I really do not know[;] it has been such a help to them poor things)[.] Do you think that you could use your influence for them to have that order removed from Strachan & Millane to Mr Wapling store keeper here at Dartmoor. when they remove from there to here until times get better. Winter time is so hard to live in & severe, & also he struggled to get over to this part to be near his sister & I, about 3 or 4 years ago[;] poor Bertie & Polly. you can understand why I write to you on their behalf: do not think me rude: for both Bertie & his wife cling to me. beside Blanche whom I am living with the 2 other

girls have gone their different ways[;] poor Alf is now dead & there is only Gilbert whom we hope & trust will come back to us safe. kindly excuse me for entering on all this, but you have proved a true friend to me taking an interest in us & our doings. Would you kindly let us know whether the members are going to grant us our request, we are anxious to know as it is some time since we applied. Will you kindly reply & let me know, trusting to hear a favourably answer

I remain yours respectfully
E. M. Stephen

On 14 September 1919 Emily's son Gilbert, a returned soldier, died in the Caulfield military hospital.

Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 14 July, 1920¹⁹⁷

Dear Sir

Bert has requested me to write to you. he is anxious to know what the members have decided on about his application to be allowed to reside on Lake Tyers Station & his two children[;] he would like to know their decision at once if you would kindly reply

I am yrs respectfully
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
16 September, 1920¹⁹⁸*

Dear Sir

Re my son. I think it best & wisest for him & his two children to go on the mission station where they will be well provided for. Bertie is very anxious to get away from here having heard that there are 5 new cottages empty[;] he wishes to secure one & make arrangements for him & his two children[;] he has always wished to go to Lake Tyers; personally I think it best that they remove over. The strain of the last year is telling on me[.] I feel quite run down & 5 children to care for is too much[;] the 2 women are away working to help with the home, & when the children are to go over if you will kindly send a pass for me to take them over to Lake Tyers[.] I will be very pleased to take them over to their new home & the change will do me good[.] If you will give me a week's notice so as to get their clothes all ready. Trusting to hear a favourable reply.

I remain yrs respectfully
E. M. Stephen

Winnie Austin

In March 1916 the Board removed Winnie from her family at Framlingham, sending her to live at Lake Condah.¹⁹⁹

*Winnie Austin, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
25 November, 1916²⁰⁰*

Dear Sir

in dropping you these few lines to ask you if I could go home to my mother as I am feeling unhappy hear & very lonely for my mother. I was a very good girl hear & I learnt a good deal hear and every morning I was up at the house for an hour before school went in, an I know how to clean right through the mission house as good as any girl of seventeen, I was very fond of Mr & Mrs Galbraith and they are very good to me, and there will be a buggy coming down for me which my mother is sending down for me and I will wate a few days for reply[.] Please sir kindly let me know at once if I could go home and I have been hear nine months now

Trusting you will grant my request

I am your obedient servant

Winnifred Austin

The local guardian at Framlingham also asked the Board to allow Winnie to go home but the Board refused.

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to the acting manager, Lake Condah,
7 December, 1916²⁰¹*

Sir,

Regarding the application of Winnie Austin to be allowed to return to her mother at Framlingham Camp, I am to inform you that the Board disapproves of her leaving the station where she has the advantage of careful training under the supervision of the matron, which is not possible at the Camp, under present conditions. It is necessary that the child should have the care and attention of the matron for some time longer, and in those circumstances her request has been refused.

yours faithfully

Secretary

In January 1917 Winnie's aunt Ada Austin went to Lake Condah with the intention of bringing Winnie back to Framlingham. The Board requested a report from Mr Galbraith on the situation. Galbraith recommended that the sooner Ada returned to Purnim the better. He wrote: 'I would like to suggest that Winnie Austin should either remain here or be sent to some home where proper care and attention can be given to her education and training as she is a fine girl & just the age to remember what she is taught'. Mr Johnstone, the local guardian at Framlingham again wrote to the Board at the end of January 1918, stating that 're Winnie Austin her relatives are very dissatisfied with her being at Condah as they say she is fretting to get home and looking

very thin[.] Mrs Ellen Good is willing to take her to her place and take care of her till I get a suitable place for her. she is a good little girl and well behaved[;] in my opinion it would be nice for the little girl to come to Mrs Good if the Board would sanction it'.

In May 1917 Mrs Galbraith complained to the Board that since Ada Austin's visit Winnie had been impudent towards her, especially whenever she received a letter. The Board replied that if Mrs Galbraith was unable to manage Winnie it would consider moving Winnie to another station. On 22 May Mr Galbraith wrote to the Board suggesting that Winnie be placed in a home away from the influence of her parents and relatives. The Secretary informed him that the matter would be brought before the Board as soon as possible.²⁰²

*Winnie Austin, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
11 June, 1917²⁰³*

Dear Sir

In writing you this few lines to ask you will you let me to go back to my mother for a week for I feel very lonely and I would like to go back to see my mother. I never saw her ever since I came down hear 16 month[;] when the chief secretary was here he told me he would let me go some times and see my mother[.] I crave to see my mother. will you let me go now for a week. I promise you I would come back if you want me to[.] I would like you to please to send me a pass[.] I am 13 now[;] if the master put me in the train I now me way

Winnie Austin

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Winnie Austin, Lake Condah,
25 June, 1917²⁰⁴*

Memo/

With reference to your letter of the 11th instant asking that you be allowed to visit your mother for a week I have to inform you that the Board does not consider it advisable to grant the desired permission at present.

Secretary

In July 1917 Mrs Galbraith informed the Board that she was going to Purnim to visit her father, and that she would like to take Winnie with her, so that Winnie could see her relatives. Mrs Galbraith wrote, 'it will brighten her up considerably if I take her at intervals to see her own people. She has improved wonderfully as no relations of hers are on the place or near it...at the present time her services to me are invaluable'. The Board referred the matter to Mr Galbraith, who stated that he thought the suggestion of his wife was potentially disastrous. The Board refused Mrs Galbraith's request. Mr Galbraith replied 'I am glad these requests are refused by the Board. This girl takes looking after at times & in my opinion when a change is desirable I should have her placed

in one of the Homes as I do not think the parents influence would be beneficial.'

*Winnie Austin, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
December, 1917²⁰⁵*

Dear Sir

would you kindly let me go home to see my mother[.] I am
craving to see her and my brothers & sisters just for Christmas
Winnie Austin

On 7 March, 1918 the local guardian at Framlingham, Mr Johnstone, wrote to the Board asking that Winnie Austin be allowed to return to Framlingham. He said that he would keep her at his place until he could find a situation for her with a kind Christian woman. The Board replied that if Johnstone could find a place for Winnie, the case would be reviewed.

Winnie Austin, Lake Condah, to Mr Secretary, BPA, May 1918²⁰⁶

Dear Sir

I write to tell you if I cannot go to Purnim to live I want to live with Mr & Mrs Galbraith[.] I have ask them to take me if they leave here and they have promised, If you will agree two that[.] I have learnt to do house work cooking and ironing and I also milk the two cows[.] I am also learning to make my own clothes[.] I am fourteen now and leaving school

yours truly
Winnie Austin

I will be very thankful if you well send me

morckintosh

coat as I ride for the mail to Milltown sometimes and go for the cows in the rain

Mrs Galbraith also wrote to the Secretary saying that she and her husband had become very attached to Winnie, who had been very kind and attentive to her when she, Mrs Galbraith, was ill.

In December 1918 Mrs Bon requested that the Board move Winnie to the Salvation Army Home at East Kew, and that before she left, her relatives might visit her at Lake Condah. The Board agreed.

*Winnie Austin, Lake Condah, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
December, 1918²⁰⁷*

Sir

I am miserable since your letter came. I am happy here with my master and Mrs and what have I done to be sent to a home[;] like a jail it is[.] Mrs Galbraith has taught me such alot ever since I have been here, and

when we leave hear was going to have me taught trade[.] I have been with Mr & Mrs Galbraith nearly three years and I dont want to leave them[.] I have had alot of pleasure as well as work riding and driving[.]...plenty of good food and clothing & Mrs Galbraith has taken great care of my health and she promised to take me and have me taught every thing she could, so your letter nearly sent me mad[.] I have done no wrong to be punished and sent to a home like a jail bird[.] Mrs has made me look forward to happier future[.] I am longing to get away from blacks[.] I do hate them because they are such liars and full of deceit, If you take me away from Mr & Mrs Galbraith you would break my heart for they are all I have got, they are father & mother to me, So Mrs was taking me home to see my people as soon as the old people house was, so I beg you to alter your mind

yours respectfully

Winnie Austin

Mrs Galbraith also wrote to the Board saying that the decision to move Winnie to a home was 'most callous & cruel'. Mr Galbraith wrote that Winnie did not wish to leave them and that she had been happy and contented of late. On 28 December 1918, Mr Johnstone wrote to the Board that the Aborigines at Purnim were 'in a great way' about Winnie being sent to a home. He suggested that Winnie go into service where her sister Johanna worked. The Secretary informed Johnstone that the Board would allow Winnie to stay with Mrs Galbraith until the question could be reviewed.

*Mrs Galbraith, Lake Condah, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
20 January, 1919²⁰⁸*

Sir

Mr Galbraith tells me that Winnie Austin's case is to be brought before the next meeting. The more we have her the deeper she sinks into our affections & she is deeply fond of us and knowing the decision is to be given soon makes me realize how painful the parting will be and we fully decide to take her as our own child if you consent to it...

I look in her room when she is asleep, & the feelings of a mother towards her are so powerful within me that I now realize what suffering it will be for me if we have to part.

Despite Mrs Galbraith's plea, the Board placed Winnie in the employment of a Mrs Kelly in Melbourne. Winnie wrote to the Galbraiths from her new home, referring to them as 'mummy' and 'daddy', and signing herself 'Peggy'.

*Winnie Austin, Aspendale, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah,
17 February, 1920²⁰⁹*

Dear Daddy

Just a hurried note trust they will reach both well as I havent had a letter from mummie this last few weeks & wondering how she is[.] I also hope everything goes well with her & take great care of her wont you[.] I am so busy my washing day & feel a bit tired at times. Well daddy are you doing much [?] Now well I close this note as I am hurried to tea[;] hope you are both well & to hear from mummie soon

regards sincerely

Peggy

Daddy ask mummie to
drop me a line soon as she can

I am longing to see you both. I am so lonely concidering no letters from home

Winnie Austin, Aspendale, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, March, 1920²¹⁰

As I am in my present position, And in need of an holiday, I have not had a holiday since I have been with Mrs Kelly or been out anywhere, except when Mrs Galbraith come to Melbourne, I was allowed to visit her every saturday afternoon[.] I have never been happy since leaving Mrs Galbraith[;] my love for her is dearly & feel very lonely away from her. In fact Mr & Mrs Galbraith are like a father & mother to me, they treat me as their own child[.] I am longing to go back to them[;] they want me badly, I am kept very close to my work & have too much to do for a girl of fifteen & feel worn out at time & I cannot stay here much, trusting the Board will grant my request. yours to oblige.

Winnie Austin

*Winnie Austin, Aspendale, to Mrs Galbraith, Lake Condah,
10 March, 1920²¹¹*

My Dear M

your letter to hand which I have received[;] pleased to know all is well as I am now to begin my washing[.] Sorry I could not drop you a line any sooner[;] well my dear will you write to the Board[?] I will also send in an application to [?] Government[.] Now you will write at once[.] I am longing to leave here soon so if they do not let me go to you then I will apply again to get another situation[.] I cant stay here much longer[;] trust you are both well[;] love to Daddy & your dear self. I hope you are feeling much better in health as you were so busy today[;] hope to hear from you soon. Now my mistress is just having a rest[;] all is well & will close

xxx Sincerely Peggy

On 15 March, 1920, Mrs Galbraith wrote to the Board asking them to allow her and her husband to adopt Winnie as their own child. The Board, however, decided that Winnie should remain with Mrs Kelly. The Secretary wrote to Mrs Kelly advising her to discourage outside communication and to peruse any letters that Winnie sent or received. Soon afterwards Winnie ran away from Mrs Kelly's place to a house in Brighton where her sister Johanna was in service. Winnie was employed there for a while. By October 1920 she was working for Mr Gleeson, the former local guardian at Purnim, and near her family.

Rose Foster

In October 1916 the BPA sent Rose's daughters Rhoda and Kate to the Riddell Girls' Home in Melbourne. By January 1917 they were living at the Oakleigh Reformatory.

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
15 January, 1917²¹²*

Sir

I wish to ask the Boards permission to remove to Lake Tyers as soon as possible as my two little children are not in the best of health here

Sir

I may state this that if the house is not ready I am quit willing to live in a camp until the house is ready

Sir

I wish to mention about my two girls Katie and Rhoda MacLennon that are in the Homes at Oakleigh Convent[.] I have put them there for not behaving themself Sir

I think that they have done their time and I would like to have them home with me

Trusting for your help

I remain

yours faithfully

Mrs Foster

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
27 January, 1917²¹³*

Sir

I am writing you a few lines to let you know that I am very anxious to go & see the last of my dear mother that not expected to live[;] thats the news I have received & for me to go at once[.] Dear Sir kindly send me a free pass for me & the two girls to go at once to see the last of her as she in the Bairnsdale hospital & its her wish to see us before she goes from this world[.] Sir I would be very very thankful by

sending our free pass @ once

I remain yours
truly
Rosy Foster

The Board granted Rose a pass for herself and one daughter to go to the Bairnsdale hospital to visit her mother Catherine Chase, on the condition that she did not visit Lake Tyers.

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
24 September, 1917*²¹⁴

Sir

In conveying my application to you also kindly asking if the Board of Aborigines would grant my request by permitting my two daughters at Oakleigh Convent Home. Sir my desire is I want them to come home with us to Lake Tyers[.] Sir I would be very pleased & thankful to the Board if they would approve of my request and also to meet us @ the Railway Station[.] this is all @ present trusting my request be granted

I am yours
faithfully
Rosy Foster

Mrs Bon visited the Reformatory in October 1917 and reported to the Board that Kate and Rhoda were employed in the kitchen and were happier than they had been at the Riddell Home. She said that they wanted to be visited by their mother Rose Foster.²¹⁵

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to Mr McLeod, Chief Secretary,
14 November, 1917*²¹⁶

Sir

May I have the pleasure of conveying to you by kindly imploring of the Board of Aborigines by permitting me to keep the little Harmonica in my care as Mr Galbraith has handed it over to me for serviceable use while our friends from Coranderrk are having their little meetings for the time being while they are here[.] Sir I would like very much if the Board would kindly let me keep the Harmonica for ourselves for the sake of my two big girls Rohda & Kate Foster. Sir I would be very very thankful with the Board for granting my approval according to my request

I am yours
faithfully
Mrs E Foster

After conferring with Mr Galbraith the Board decided that the harmonica should remain in the custody of the manager.

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 13 March, 1918*²¹⁷

Sir

I am asking the Boards permission to remove to Lake Tyers as my sister is not at all in the best of health

Sir I may state this that she is the only one sister I have got and I would like very much to be with her[.] Sir the last time my dear mother was on her death bed[.] I was not there in time to have a few words with her and I would not like such a thing to happen again

Trusting you will see into the matter

and oblige

Mrs Foster

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 7 June, 1918*²¹⁸

Sir

I wish to ask the Members of the Board if it is possible to get my two girls who is at home the again[;] they have been there a nearly two years[;] it is almost breaking my heart for the two girls[.] I would like to know if there are in there for a certin time[;] if it is would you mind letting me know

Sir I have wrritten to Mr Parker about the girls Rodah McLennon an Katie McLennon[;] they are at the Homes Convent the Good Shepard Oeakleigh

Oakeligh

Mothers always feels for her children

Sir if it is possible to let them out sooner I shall be very thankfull

I am yours

Sincerely Rose Foster

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 20 June, 1918*²¹⁹

Sir

I wish to ask the Board's permission for a pass to see my two daughters which are in Melbourne as I have not seen them for a long time[.] Sir I would be very pleased if the Boards could grant my request[.] I may say this that it hurts my feelings very much to know that are so far away from me[;] a mother feels for her children

trusting you will see into the matter

I am yours

faithfully

Rose Foster

Sir I wish to know the reason why the girls do not write to me[.] I have not heard from them for the last six months[.] I would like to know why they are not writing

In 1918 Rose and her family moved back to Lake Tyers. In 1919 the manager of Lake Tyers reported that Rose and Ted were not suitable 'guardians' of their children because they allowed too many men to visit their house on the station. The Board responded by placing another of Rose's daughters, Grace Foster, at the Oakleigh Reformatory with her sisters Kate and Rhoda.²²⁰ In early 1920 Kate and Grace escaped from the reformatory to the small mission run by Isabella Hetherington at Bunyip. Soon afterwards, at the request of the reformatory, Rhoda and two other Aboriginal girls (Alison Johnson and Minna Hood) were sent to Bunyip as well.²²¹

*Rose Foster, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, January, 1920*²²²

Sir

I wish to ask the Boards permission for at least two or three days as I wish to go to Bunyip to see my dear children[.] I am not asking for a pass[.] I am quite willing to pay my own way

Trusting that the Board will agree with me

I am yours

faithful

Rose Foster

Shortly afterwards, Rose, with her baby and her daughter Nora, visited her daughters at Bunyip.

*Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Bruce Ferguson, manager, Lake Tyers, 13 February, 1920*²²³

Sir,

I have to inform you that Miss Hetherington of the Mission Home, Bunyip, called at this Office on the 12th instant and stated that Mrs. Foster and her two children had again visited her at Bunyip and refused to leave. I advised Miss Hetherington to notify the Police at Bunyip with a view to having Mrs Foster returned to Lake Tyers.

Yours faithfully

A. E. Parker

*Rose Foster, Lakes Entrance, telegram to Mrs Bon, BPA, 7 July, 1920*²²⁴

Can my three girls come home their father very ill

Rose Foster

*Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to manager, Lake Tyers, 10 July, 1920*²²⁵

Sir,

I am to inform you that Mrs. Bon has forwarded to this Office a telegram from Mrs. Rose Foster, requesting that her three girls be allowed to visit Lake Tyers as their father is ill.

I have to inform you that as it is not considered in the best interests of the girls to comply with the request same has been refused.

Kindly inform Mrs. Foster accordingly.

Yours faithfully
Secretary

In January 1921 the Board decided that the girls were to be sent back to the Oakleigh Reformatory because Miss Hetherington could not manage them. Grace and Rhoda were sent back to the reformatory under police escort but Kate, who had managed to escape the police, remained at Bunyip until May when she made her way to Lake Tyers.

*Rose Foster, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 5 August, 1921*²²⁶

Sir

May I have the pleasure of writing a few lines by applying for my two girls Gracie & Rhoda Foster to be permitted to come home here again as it was promised by the Board of them coming home in August[.] Sir I would like very much to have them home by next week[.] I would be very thankful to our Board of Aborigines to grant my wishes by permitting them to come home

I remain yours

truly
Rosy Foster

The Board informed Rose that the girls were presently sick with influenza and that as soon as they recovered they would return to Lake Tyers. Rose's daughters were finally returned to her in December 1921. Grace lived only until 1923 when she died from tuberculosis.

Ada Austin

*Ada Austin, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, January, 1917*²²⁷

Dear Sir

I have come to Lake Condah to see my neice Winnie Austin if I can take her home again[;] this child I had in my home living with me since she was born & besides she not a strong girl very delicate[;] she to young to go out to work[;] she was only eleven when she came here at the month of March[;] shes twelve now[;] her mother Lena lives in my home with me the same house were my uncle [?] lives, Mrs Galbraith gives her a good report and a good character and she has learnt enough now to keep a house clean and watch any meal cooking and she speaks very high of her[;] she is truthful honest & clean, can be depended upon[.] I am older than Winnie mother and take care of all her children and I have always been respectable myself & try to live good[;] while I am here on a short visit I find Mrs Galbraith a very nice lady also Mr Galbraith[;] no more to say

trusting you are quiet well
yours truly
Ada Austin

Crouchs are going driving next Thursday to Purnim & Im going with them

Mr Galbraith forwarded this letter to the Board with his own note that he suspected Ada would try to take Winnie from the station without permission. He stated that if there was any trouble he would call the police to remove Ada from the station.

Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mr Macleod, Chief Secretary, March, 1917²²⁸

Dear Sir

I understood that Mrs Bon & you said we were to have Winnie back[;] that it was very cruel of having her there[.] Mrs Stahle was a good lady but not Mrs Galbraith[;] the seven weeks I was there I had enough of her. I can speak the truth & what I can prove she wanted Ethel Austin to go out to work for a gentleman name Mr Lambeth & she growled over Ethel not going to work & now that girl went under an operation at Hamilton hospital & got her finger cut off[.] Im going to have a long piece put in Hamilton & Warrnambool paper for the public to see[;] some of the blacks from Condah wrote up here & saying the board wont let her come[.] Mrs & Mr Galbraith is only keeping her for work & do what they like with her Mr Murray gave me permission to get that girl back when I want her[;] they talk about the girl just like if she done murder[.] Im going all round now for a petition has I cant get my girl home[.] Mrs Carter & Mrs King use to tell me that she was a good girl & use to do all what she told to do[;] she hadent know one down there to speak up for her[;] my dear Mrs Mcleod with all my heart & soul is there a way that we should get that girl back[;] all my white friends was so pleased to hear of Winnie was to be back I told them Mrs Bon said we can have her[;] so I am asking you with all my heart & soul[;] we let the girl went with Mrs Rose last year just for a few months & here I am getting treated very bad & one dear Gentlemen said to my uncle that day you were here ask my uncle Wisey & said to him would you like to have your little girl back again & my uncle Wisey said yes with all my heart & soul & the Gentleman said well you shall have her back & our hearts were all glad that day we were rejoicing over Winnie & my uncle rared up that girl[;] he was her Guardian[.] Mrs Galbraith knowed that Mrs Bon was going to Condah[.] I was told that was why they got me out of the road[.] I could see that you got a good face so your heart must be good[.] I hope you could feel with our hearts[.] Im praying with all my heart & soul that God may help you to get that girl home[.] I cant live with out her[;] she is there now twelve months & her Mrs only bought her a pair of shoes once[;] we had to keep her in boots & send her some clothing while she was there[.] Mr Murray was line[lying][.] I wouldnt be like this[;] he was always a good friend to me & he knowed me well[;] it done my heart good to see dear Mrs Bon that day[;] dear Sir Ill now close with

my kindest wishes to you hoping you are quiet well has it leaves me
not very well at present thinking about my poor child

yrs sincere
Ada Austin

*Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah,
4 December, 1917²²⁹*

Dear Sir I am just writing to you to see if my girl Winnie comming
home for Christmas has Winnie wrote up to us saying yous might let
her up for Christmas[;] her sister seemed overjoy to hear it has Winnie
sister is far away in Gippsland with a lady & shell be home on
Christmas eve[;] so Ill be very happy to see poor little Winnie if she be
home for Christmas & could you please let us know as if Mrs Galbraith
will bring her half away & many thousand thanks to you for your good
great kindness to let her come home for Christmas[;] Im sure her little
heart would be over joyed to see us all once more has she been away
now from us twenty one month[;] nearly to years[.] I will now close[;]
with my kindest regards & best wishes

my heart is full of joy
to hear you letting
Winnie home for Christmas
I suppose shes a big girl now
I remain yrs sincere
Ada Austin

Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mr Bailey, MLA, Port Fairy, 1918²³⁰

Dear Sir

I am just writing these few lines to see if you can do anything for me on
account of my neice Winnie Austin a girl of 14 years. She went to
Condah two years ago for a change & when she wanted to come home
to her mother they refused to let her come home[,] not even to see her
mother & I heard that she has been treated very harshly by the woman
manager & all her letters are opened & she accuses her of doing
things[;] that I know from friends[;] she is treated very badly though its
more than she would dare to let us know. They have a manager thats
not a good man[;] theres things that if the aboriginal Board knew there
things but its kept dark[;] but if nothing is done to let her home Ill
expose him to the public through the paper[;] so Sir I want to see if you
can write to the Board & see if she can come home or else let her get to
her people that will look after[;] they are keeping her there on account
of her mother has had her downfalls same as white women but she has
looked after her children & reared them not put them out of the road as
some white women do[.] I saw Mr Deamy & he promised to do his best
for me but he never wrote to let me know & the Board has been here &
they promised to see into it for me & none of them has put themselves
out any more about it makes us very miserable when we know she is

longing to come home & she shouldnt be punished for what her mother has done[;] a child has feelings for her mother[;] it dont matter what her mother is[;] if she learns wrong Condah is first the place for her to go wrong & I hear that she tells people that she will put her in the homes & the poor girl is scared of her wits so please do your best. I can prove all I say about the manager Mr Galbraith & Ill show him up through a lawyer as I know its through his wife she is kept there on account of her lies to the Board. Mr Slyvester a portland lawyer had a case put into his hand about the manager but the parents wouldnt carry it through[;] so he is no good man to be manager over black people. he is no good[;] he is a drunkard of one of the worst type & the Board dont know it. Dear Sir I hope to hear from you as soon a possible. it seems because we are black people they can do what they like with us[;] they ought to treat us all alike as we got relations fighting at the front & they shouldnt treat our children like this[.] I will be very grateful. I have spoken to friends in Warrnambool & they dont seem to do anything for us so I am depending on you as some of my white friends told me to try & write to you about it

this is all
I remain yours truly
Ada Austin

you might remember the Board coming to visit our station; you were among them at the time; you might have heard them speak of this case about Winnie Austin.

Mr Bailey brought Ada's letter before the Board. The Secretary replied to Ada: 'I have to call your attention to previous replies sent to you on the subject.'

*Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, December, 1918*²³¹

Dear Mr Parker just letting you know has theres a friend the name of Mrs Albert arrived from Condah here on Thursday night[.] I was at the station when she told me this to try & do our best & bring Winnie away for a certain reason has Winnie there[.] Ill have it published in through the papers for public to see that man done what he like before & a very bad lies was told about him[;] he takes Winnie every were about herself with him when he goes riding & Winnie left in the house alone with that man[.] Galbraith drunk very drunk & Mrs leaves her[;] we going to see a lawyer about it[;] its not fair[.] Ill write to the governor[.] Winnie had to friends killed at the war doing there bit helping to make australia free[;] we only have to go for her[;] you told me your self & Mr Bailey that if we got a place Winnie could come but theres a lot of drunkards can live & do what they like on the station & nothing said about it & Johnson reported a lie about me & Lena if Winnie away from there & working for her living it will be all right for a certain reason[.] I dont want her home at my place but theres plenty of good ladies that would take her[;] they are better away mong good

class of white people[;] theres a half caste woman that never before lived on a black station always out doing for herself among white people & her people rent a big house in Melbourne & they are not protected by the board[;] yet this woman what calls herself Mrs Egan that is now staying at Mrs Good place[;] shes not married by law only living with Ted Egan & I am protected by the board & yet I cant get a pass to have a holiday & theres a friend of mine dying now Mrs Saunders & we havent got the means to see her[.] I would of like to seen the last of her & her only son was at the front[;] a gunner not home yet[.] Mrs Rose told me that you are a good gentleman & very fair[.] I know that[;] hoping youll help us[.] Winnie is not safe there hope & trust by God help that she not left there any longer[;] theres one of the best white lady ever fine in Warrnambool Christian & she wrote for Winnie[.] Ill be writing again to you next week[.] I want to explain one thing about myself to you[;] this concern my own business[.] I have been very bad suffering this couple of month with a very bad head & ear I havent been so good in health[.] Ill now close with kindest regards trusting you are quite well

yrs truly
Ada Austin

Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, December, 1918²³²

Dear Sir just letting you know that Winnie can get a place at Warrnambool[;] theres a lot of girls wanted here has all the girls hard to get[;] they all work at the factory & at the public hospital[;] they want girls & the Matron is very good[;] we wouldnt care only the Manager no good[;] its hard live when a poor girl belongs to the place & born here & she punished away[;] the girl done no harm & her mother still lives on the place & all the men can live to there hearts content & drink any time they like & yet they can be all allowed to live here long has they like[.] Mr Johnson told a lie about me to you[.] Mrs Rose told me about it[;] we should all be fair with one another[.] Joey never receive a penny first place she worked at & theres one of the very best true & faithful girls here that is very honest would tell you the truth about that[;] her name is Esther Couzens[;] this girl now works at Peterborough near Port Campbell to years & all the white people said that Johnson should of gave Joey more than five has they well up people & Joey a good worker & seventeen[;] she was work more than that since war time boots & clothes were very dear[;] couldnt get any thing cheap any where[.] Mrs Bon told me that all the dark girls must get there good wages well has white girls[;] when young girls fourteen they dont keep them on the place[;] her sister Joey had to send Winnie ten shillings from Bunyip to pay for what she get from Mrs Galbraith. I been very bad me self for six weeks with a very bad ears[.] I was at the hospital last week for couple of days[;] my ears was all swell[.] Im not better of it yet[;] its still bad[.] I havent been into good of health late[.] I

have no more to say at present[;] hoping you are quiet well[;] close with kindest regards yrs truly

Ada Austin

we were all please of
the nice clothes you
sent to us this year better than what we got before
wishing you a merry Christmas

Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mrs Beckett, Melbourne, February, 1919²³³

Dear Mrs Beckett

Joey received your letter last night & we are very sorry to tell you that we cant let her go back[;] shes got to be at home now near us has her health is broke down all to gether & its just by the will of God that shes spared to us[;] her cousin died with diptheria second of january & we wasnt allowed to tell her till her quarinte was over[;] the nurses & matron & doctors could proved that she was nearly gone & it [?] her heart very weak[;] shes so sad & it played up with her very much[;] we very sorry our selves that she couldnt go back when she promise you to go back[;] the poor girl didnt know what was befor her[;] matron told her she has to be kept very quiet & be very careful & quiet we are writing no lies all but the truth[;] when she gets strong again theres a lady waiting for her to give her light work & good wages[;] forgot to tell you that if joey would of been another day home she would of been dead Lena & I didnt take Joey away from any of her places[;] the girl left herself has she wasnt getting nothing at the first place she's work & Mr Johnson a rich man his son had her working for five shilling a week[;] if Mr Johnson daughter was poor & earning a living he woudent like her to work for five shilling a week[.] Mr Johnson told me & Mrs Rose at purnim that he didnt write about anything[;] even if Joey was strong we woudent of been able to let her go through Melbourne has we see by the Warrnambool papers & Melbourne papers about the bad disease of influenza & death & fresh cases every day in Melbourne[;] one young lady a school teacher went from Purnim for her holiday to Melbourne & she was dead & buried a week before her people here knew anything about it[;] caught that bad influenza[;] even it was carried from Melbourne to Hamilton[;] its not safe for any one to travel about[;] so we want her clothes sent back what few she got there[;] she would of been back only for the trouble of sickness

hoping you are quiet well yourself
yrs truly

Ada Austin

Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mrs Bon, BPA, February, 1919²³⁴

Dear Mrs Bon

I am just able to write to you[;] its five weeks since I got your letter[.] I was quarantine & couldnt get about & I had Lena children to mine,

Lena only just seen your letter[.] Lena was very bad with diptheria for 5 weeks at Hospital, Warrnambool, & her daughter Johanna she came from Mrs Beckett Bunyip for her holiday & she just had Christmas day home & the poor girl was dangerously ill at hospital so Matron & Master & Doctor told her to keep very quiet & not to do to much or she not to walk to much[;] her heart is very weak[.] Matron of hospital said the girl was over worked[;] done to much work when she was at Mrs Becketts[;] she got to have a good spell & kept quiet before she can do a little again she quarrintine now for a fortnight & please dear Mrs Bon can you let the girl have rations for a month has shes not able to earn her living for a while[;] shes been working for her own living since she was fourteen so if you can oblige us just for a month & then shell be strong enough to again to work for herself, poor old Mr Johnson didnt like leaving us[.] I mean our old manager he was very old & not to strong[;] one of my neices died at the hospital with diptheria[.] my brother daughter[.] she was a darling girl but gone home to heaven[;] my dear Mrs Bon we got a lot of trouble to put up with in this world[.] I havent not one good friend in this earthly world to look to for help unless our help will come from God, well now dear Mrs Bon I must confess the truth to you that when I reach Mr Parker letter saying that you ask him to put Winnie in the Salvation Army Home at Kew it was a great blow to us[;] we didnt expect that at all when Mr Parker & Bailey said we get a good lady for Winnie to go out working for her self[.] I had faith in them & believed there words for the truth[.] I showed Mrs Arden letter at our little church room to Mr Parker where Mrs Arden said that Winnie will be in the homes & Mr Parker put his hand up to me & said no rest your mind at that will never be[;] we just got some piteful letters from Winnie & its a shame for the girl to be treated bad[;] we have never done any criminals in our family[;] shes belong to here & born here & down there they just do what they like to her[;] all our dear brave soldiers boy got killed at the front[;] theres none to come back alive[;] my brother brotherinlaw & Winnie uncle & cousin & my nephew all done there share helping to make Australia free & this is the way how the Government treating us[;] never seen Winnie for four years but I seen her to years ago[;] we gone to wrote to the King[;] some white gentleman said that the Authorities shoudent allow that with one poor girl has theres sins & downfalls happen all over this great wide world rich & poor black & white great & small[.] I was told from a white person in Warrnambool that it was Mrs King writing to you to put Winnie in the homes[;] she has a daughter & one son & she ought to know what the feelings is[;] she woudent send her big fine son to the war but they will report Winnie after she was sent there just for her holiday & it seems the law she was kept[;] we all know you are a good Christian lady & a good white heart & the help of God from Heaven may guide you to feel for the poor girl & get her back

God bless you
my kindness love to you
your friend
Ada Austin

I hope you will take great care of yourself in Melbourne at the present time has we read about that dangers of illness we didnt get the little clothes that you mention of in your letter

Mrs Bon forwarded Ada's letter to Mr Parker.

Mrs Bon, BPA, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 10 February, 1919²³⁵

Dear Mr Parker

The enclosed letter which reached me on Saturday I wish you to place before the Board Meeting Tomorrow together with the letter written to me by the child's mother which I sent to the Chief Secretary & which you informed me had been handed to you.

In that letter the mother desires the removal of her child from Condah for various reasons[;] being overworked if I remember rightly is one. She also makes a serious charge against the manager refering me for information to a local [?]. After perusing that letter one could only arrive at the conclusion that the child should be removed.

I considered the Salvation Army Home wd be a good home for the child where her welfare temporal & spiritual would receive every attention.

The mothers relatives have been laboring under the false impression that Winnie wd have to mix with criminals instead of innocent children like herself....I propose that Winnie be removed from Condah at the request of the mother & a suitable home provided for her...

As a result of Mrs Bon's letter the Board resolved that Mrs Bon be responsible for finding a situation for Winnie. Mrs Bon arranged for Winnie to go to a Mrs Kelly in Ivanhoe.

Ada Austin, Framlingham, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, October, 1920²³⁶

To Mr Parker

I am just writing to let you know that my brother Chris Austin dont deserve any help of any kind from the Board[;] just letting you know the whole truth[;] that you & all the other members protection of Aboriginal Board dont know what goes on down here on this station[;] every body does almost what they like here[;] men can get there rations & help any time through the winter[;] first month of may when football starts some of them play & get good payment plenty money & every Sunday they all drink like a house on fire[;] they all run the

pubs Cudgee & Purnim so pub drinking every Sunday after Sunday & this is all the truth & no lies[.] Mr Harvey was to good to them & never like to send any there reports in[;] they need a strict Boss[;] most of them does what they like on the place & nothing said about it[;] they have enough money some times that would have enough money to pay for there tucker all through the winter month[.] Chris Austin is very low bad wicked man[;] he nearly killed me for nothing at all[;] he thrashed me & bruised me & I have never been well & strong since I had my death I suffer a lot with a bad heart[.] I gave my brother no reason to be nasty with me[;] this place is fit to be published in the paper with all its badness & drinking & sunday drinking[;] cant it be kept down[;] white people try to do good for them[;] church wont do them any good & bad lot of drunkards & old Chris Austin[;] can we be protected when there bad insult drunkards does what they like on the reserve[;] they lucky to get there rations[;] any way Ill now close

yrs truly

Ada Austin

I must thank you for your kind message that you delivered to Mr Harvey at the time of my sad trouble[.]

Lena cripple this nine month cant walk or do anything shes a great sufferer[.] Im tired out looking after them[.] I suffer myself with a very bad heart & chest

In response to Ada's letter and also an anonymous letter complaining about the men drinking, the Board requested that an inquiry be made into the matter. Constable Thomas of Warrnambool inquired and he found that Ada Austin had been assaulted by Chris Austin on 6 October, 1920. Thomas summoned Chris Austin to the Warrnambool Court of Petty Sessions where he was fined £2 in default 14 days' imprisonment. Thomas also inquired into drunkenness on the station but stated he could not find evidence of this.

Fanny Wandin

Mrs W. Wandin, Coranderrk, to Secretary, BPA, 23 February, 1917²³⁷

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you as I am about to be laid up and I have engaged Mrs Dunolly my mother in law to nurse me [but] her husband is not to well and cannot be left alone for any time. Mrs Dunolly cannot come to me to nurse me[.] I would like to know if the Board would allow me to stop with my mother Mrs Young until I am over my confinement which I expect to take place any day. If you would kindly grant my request I would be very much obliged as Mrs Dunolly could look after me here. I can support myself while I am with my mother

Yours Faithfully
Mrs W. Wandin

*Mrs W. Wandin, Badger Creek, Healesville, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary,
BPA, 22 July, 1918²³⁸*

Dear Sir

I would respectfully ask for permission to stay on the Coranderrk Station with my mother during my husband's absence while away shearing[.] I might state the place where we are staying near the mountains is very lonely. I could provide for myself if you kindly permit me to stay.

Trusting you will oblige

I am

Yours Faithfully

Mrs W. Wandin

Fanny's request was approved on the condition that her husband provided for her during her stay.

In 1926 the manager of Lake Tyers, George Baldwin, complained to the Board that the Wandin family were camped close to Lake Tyers and sending their children to the station school. The Board advised Baldwin to inform Willie Wandin that he was not eligible for assistance and to remove from the district.²³⁹

Katherine McCreddie

*Katherine McCreddie, Lindenow South, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary,
BPA, 5 March, 1917²⁴⁰*

To Mr Ditchburn

Im writing to ask you would you grant us a favor, by letting us have a return railway fares from Healesville to Lindenow to see our sister-in-law who is an invalid at Coranderrk Mission Station[;] my sister & husband and myself and two little boys, my brother died in the Melbourne hospital about three weeks ago, and wanted to see my sister and myself but we could not manage our fares, being in poor circumstances, we would like to see her very much as she is not able to travel to us. Hoping it is not asking too much as I have never troubled the board for anything before, just this one favour if they will grant it to us, 3 grown up, & two children

I remain

yours obediently

Katherine McCreddie

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Katherine McCreddie, Lindenow
South, 7 March, 1917²⁴¹*

Memo/

In reply to your letter of the 5th instant asking for Railway passes from Lindenow to Healesville to visit your sister-in-law, I am directed to

state that as Mrs Logan and family are in good health, there is no necessity for the visit.

Secretary

Lena Austin

Lena's daughter Winnie was removed to Lake Condah by the BPA in March 1916.

*Lena Austin, Purnim, to Mr Macleod, Chief Secretary, BPA,
29 March, 1917²⁴²*

Dear sir in writing you these few lines hoping it will find you enjoying the very best of health as it leaves me not very well at present[.] Dear sir I am thinking about my poor little girl winnie[;] she is longing to come home again to her own native part[;] you no Mr MacCleod that it is quite natural for a child to come home to her own mother and relations[.] Dear sir I dont know what they is keeping my winnie there for[;] my sister got a letter from Winnie the very same day you was here and Winnie was telling her that Mrs Galbraith is treating her very unkindly[;] she knocked her head up against the door and she struck her[;] she said to winnie you havent got your old aunt ada to take your part now[;] she told us in her letter that if she is left there much longer she will die[;] dear sir if you could only see the letters that my poor little girl writes home it would bring the tears to your eyes to see how the way she pleads to come home it would make your heart ache[;] dear sir if you know what a fathers love is for his children consider a mothers love for her child[;] every mother loves her child and it is quite natural that every child should love there mother[.] I have reared my little Winnie from a baby and every one on this very place can tell you that she has never been neglected so: Mr Macleod I plead with you from the very depth of my poor heart just for sake of my little girl as she is breaking her heart to come home once again as Mrs Galbraith is over working her[;] she is got her up the house now working her to much[;] she have to get up six oclock in the morning and scrub before she goes to school and she have to work when she comes out again[;] she tells us in the letter that she has got no time for herself[;] try your level best to get my little girl Winnie home again and the Lord God Almighty will reward you for it by and bye with kind regards to you[;] yours sincerely Lena Austin

Lena Austin, Purnim, to Winnie Austin, Lake Condah, 11 April, 1917²⁴³

Mr dearest darling Daughter I now write you these few lines hoping it will find you in good health[;] you dont no how much I long for you[.] I am always thinking about you[;] me and aunty ada also your poor little brothers Willie and Chris they are always saying to me when is sister Winnie coming home again mummy and your brother Arthur to and also Joey[.] I wrote to Mrs Bon about you[.] I received a letter from Mrs Bon[.] I was telling her all what you tell us in your letter how that brute

of a woman treats you and I told her how you are longing to come home again and I told her if you could only see my girls letter it would almost break your heart to read it and if you could write a nice letter to Mrs Bon and explain how that woman treats you and tell her everything[:] how she makes you get up early in the morning and how she makes you work and tell her how you are longing to come home again and how you are fretting for home and tell her if you stay there much longer that you will be a dead girl and tell her how the way she treated you since your aunty ada left[:] as Mrs Bon wants to see your letter for herself and she told me in my letter that she wants to see your letter[:] so write at once to her and send it up to me and I will send it down to her because I have her address here

so dont forget what I told you to do[:] what ever you do do it at once[:] dont waste no time my darling girl[:] all your brothers sends there very best love to you and your little sister Mary

[attached to the letter was a scrap of paper saying:]

Dear Winnie

I am sending your letter in aunty flora's letter because old mother Galley might open it and I dont want [her] to see your letter

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Lena Austin, Framlingham,
18 June, 1917²⁴⁴*

Memo

I have to acknowledge the receipt of letters from Ada Austin and yourself addressed to the Hon the Chief Secretary, asking that Winnie be returned to your care from Lake Condah Station. In reply I am directed to inform you that the Chief Secretary cannot grant your request as he considers that the environment of Framlingham is not conducive to the best moral interests of Winnie.

Secretary

Lena Austin, Purnim, to Mrs Galbraith, Lake Condah, December, 1917²⁴⁵

Dear Mrs Galbraith I now take the pleasure of writing to you these few lines hoping it will find you and Mr Galbraith in the very best of health as it leaves all the people here quite well at the present time. Dear Mrs Galbraith I received a postcard from my winnie and she was telling me that you and Mr Galbraith would like her to come home for Xmas[:] you dont no how I am longing to see my dear little Winnie again[:] it is nearly to years since I have seen her[.] I have reared that child up from a babyhood[.] I have never done away with any of my children like white women have done now[.] I have got Johanna in a good home a christian home and a kind dear christian lady[:] my Johanna is a true christian and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ[:] she is coming home soon for three weeks holidays so dear Mrs Galbraith help

my dear little winnie to come home to us for Xmas[.] If you only knew what a mothers love is for her children you would feel it very much[.] I am longing to see my dear little winnies face once again and God in heaven only knows it how my poor heart is longing once again to see her[;] so kindly let me no as I will be on the look out for a letter from you if winnie is coming home for Xmas as we can go into warrnambool and meet her when the train come in[;] so I must draw my letter to a close[;] hoping and trusting in Gods help that you will help me

I remain yours sincerely
Lena Austin

Mrs Galbraith forwarded this letter to the Board with her comment that the request was 'a most natural wish[;] a mother craving to see her child'. She was willing to take Winnie or arrange a pass for her. Mrs Galbraith thought that as Winnie would be leaving school in June it would be good to find 'a strict kind Mistress in Warrnambool so as she could be bound, but where her mother could see her regularly'.

Secretary, BPA, to Lena Austin, Framlingham, 17 December, 1918²⁴⁶

Dear Madam,

I have to inform you that at the request of Mrs Bon, the Hon the Chief Secretary has approved of the transfer of Winnie from the Lake Condah Aboriginal Station to the Salvation Army Home at East Kew. Mrs Bon desires that you should have an opportunity of seeing Winnie prior to her transfer to Melbourne and that Ada should also see her. I have written to Mrs Good asking her whether she would be willing to go for Winnie and accompany her to Melbourne and in the event of her being willing will issue passes accordingly. If you will name the Station or place where you could most easily see Winnie, I will issue passes to you and Ada also. It is proposed to transfer Winnie early in the New Year.

Yours faithfully
Secretary

Lizzie Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
November, 1917²⁴⁷*

Mr Parker

Dear Sir I now write you these few lines to ask you for a favour for my married daughter Mrs Findlay[;] she wishes to go to Lake Condah mission to spend Xmas with her grandmother Mrs Saunders as she has never seen her for 4 years & I think mother would be so pleased[;] so if you will write & let me know if she is allowed[;] trusting to hear from you by return mail

L Crough

The request was granted

Ellen Terrick

Ellen Terrick, Tarrawarra, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, July, 1918²⁴⁸

Dear Sir

Desiring greatly to be with my daughter Mrs McRae & grandchildren with my son and wife I am writing in an application to the Board to be transferred to Lake Tyers as I do not feel too well here[.] Mr McAlister is considering it very cold for my husband[.] I dont feel like staying here all the time as there is an empty house at Lake Tyers and trusting the Board will kindly grant my request.

I am yours truly
Ellen Terrick

Lizzie Patterson

Lizzie Patterson, Healesville, to Maggie and Jack Gibbs, 10 May, 1919²⁴⁹

My dear Sister and Brother in law

I got your most loving letter and was pleased to hear from you finding us all well at home[.] Emma not to well[;] she is not over her trouble yet and she wants you to come up and stay with her for company because it a lonely place where she is to be alone[;] when she got your letter she did cry & she came over to me and ask me to write to you for her because she is not to good and she is expecting soon to be layed up and she would like you to come up this week and we are expecting to see Henry home soon[.] George look well and would like to see you[;] he will soon be going back to Germany...to take prisoners back[;] so I would like you and Jack to come up and see him before he goes back and that you will be able to see Henry at the same time[.] Emma said you can stay up with her to mind the children and she will pay your fare back and if you come up I will go back with you for a fortnight holiday[.] Sarah and family are pretty well only for Evilyn[;] she was bad[;] John is better again and is still at Daby till end of June[.] Jorney Rowan is well and is a real cherely full of fun[.] Lydia and Lily Doris are all at home to see how Emma gets on[;] so dear sister send me word strait away about coming up and what train to meet[;] Soubry[?] will be so glad to see his Aunty Maggie and poor old uncle Jack again[;] the weather is nice and fine and all the fishing season is finish now[;] cant catch any fish...so I must close[;] with all our love to you and wishing to see you soon. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX L Patterson

Ellen was staying with Emma for a while but she is gone back to the station again so when she got your letter she is worrying over you now to come up and stay a while with her and she will be very pleased to

see you[;] so I must close with best love to you and Jack & girls[,] Your loving sister L Patterson

The managers of Lake Tyers and Coranderrk saw no necessity for the visit proposed by Lizzie.

Maggie Allen

Maggie Gibbs, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 19 May, 1919²⁵⁰

Sir

I am now having the pleasure in forwarding a few lines to you which I am to mention regardingly of which Im to impress to the Board[.] Sir we are in a little distress just now at present with my neice Emma Hunter who is now very ill and we would like very much to go down & see her & she wished very much also to see us as she was ailing for a length of time and its her wish for her to see us both myself & my husband. I would also kindly ask the Board to grant us a free pass for three months[.] I have also delivered my letter to our Manager which I received from my sister. And he also sympathises with us[.] I would thank the Board very much to assist us accordingly to our request

I remain yours
truly
Maggie Gibbs

Bruce Ferguson, manager of Lake Tyers, forwarded Maggie's letter with his comment: 'There does not appear to be any urgent reason for this visit'. Mr Robarts of Coranderrk also did not think that there was any reason for the Gibbs to visit as Emma was over her confinement and she already had her family and others to care for her. The Board refused to issue passes to Maggie and Jack Gibbs.

Florence Moffatt

Florence Moffatt, Lake Tyers, telegram to Mr Macalister, BPA, Tarrawarra, October, 1919²⁵¹

Elsie Barretts mother ill wishes see her can you arrange for her to come home

Florence Moffatt

Mr Macalister forwarded the telegram to the Secretary of the Board, who replied to him that 'any request of this kind should come through the Manager'.

Elsie Barrett

In June 1914 the Board sent Elsie to the Salvation Army Home in Brunswick where she remained until April 1921. During these seven

years her mother Elizabeth Jennings struggled to have her returned to Lake Tyers.²⁵² In April 1921 the Board placed Elsie in the service of a Mrs Sones. After Elsie left there of her own accord the Board arranged for her to enter into service for a Miss Dowling.

*Elsie Barrett, c/o Miss Dowling, Darlington, to Mr Parker, Secretary,
BPA, June, 1921²⁵³*

Dear Sir

I now take the pleasure in dropping you these few lines[;] well Mr Parker I am very sorry to say that I am not happy at all where I am[;] it is a nice place but I would not settle down because it is very quite up here no township at all and I dont seem to get along[;] times are so hard to me I dont mean the work so therefore Mr Parker will you send me a pass and I will go home[.] I no you would rather me stay away from Tyres but I cannot help it that one thing will have to be[.] I am very strange and home-sick[.] I want to know if I can go home in a fortnights time[;] please do send me a pass[.] I think I am going to be a failure at service[.] I am very sorry because you had to go through a lot of trouble but nevertheless such will have to be the case and Mr Parker let me know when I can come in and see you[;] the mistress is nice but I cannot do the cooking very much for her liken[;] she is very particullary about the food[.] I can cook vegetables all right but it is the different dishes she as and I can not manage them very much and another things the place is too far in the country[.] I told you that I did not want to go to the country but I thought I would just try it and another thing I cannot go out anywhere because it is too far out of the township so Mr Parker I think I will go home after all to my parents[.] I have failed once and I have failed again so send me a pass and I will go home or let me know if I can come in and see you at your office, Mr Parker I am very sorry but I cannot content myself because I have not seen mother for such a long time and you know mother as asked for me to go home to her and she is very cross with me for not going home to them she as never written to me since I told her that I was going to service[.] and she said that she wanted me home to do the work for her seeing she is not very strong[.] other wise I would not be so anxious to go home to Tyres only because I would not have another chance of seeing her seeing that I am so very far away from home and her and for her and I to be parted away from one another seeing that I am her only child she got and it seem hard for her and I both[;] so will you let me know if I can come into town and see you about things[?] I am very sorry to disappoint you like this but otherwise I think I am a perfect failure at service I know you would like to see me get on but otherwise things are so different and difficult although I would like to be earning for myself as well but mother seems very displeased with me for going out to service I will be able to go home alone to Tyres as long as someone see me off at the station and I will be alright and I will send a telegram for mother to meet me[;] so Mr Parker will you let me know

when I can come into town to see you let me know as soon as possible please[.] I suppose you will think me so ungrateful towards you and Adjutant Anderson but I am thinking mother will be very nasty towards me for not going home to her instead of going out to service and if anything did happen to her I shall never forgive myself because I never went home to her[;] it will play on my mind an perhaps drive me silly and then it will land me in the Asylum for the rest of my life[;] dont think I am talking silly but I often feel like that I often lay and think of it at nights when I am in bed[;] you know it is hard to be parted away from one another so therefore do let me go home Mr Parker please[;] so I will close hoping to hear from you soon

I remain
yours respectfully
E. Barrett

answer please and let me know what you are going to do
It is not clear what Mr Parker's response was, but on 18 June 1921, Elsie left Miss Dowling's service without the permission of the Board and went to Melbourne. The Board then made arrangements for her to return to Lake Tyers.

Maggie Johnson

In 1919 the manager at Lake Tyers arranged for Maggie Johnson's daughter Alison to be sent to the Oakleigh Reformatory. Alison had stolen a watch chain medal and the manager considered that her parents' control over her was inadequate. In November 1919 Alison escaped from the reformatory with Kate McLellan and Grace Foster, and went to Isabella Hetherington's mission at Bunyip. Her parents Maggie and William visited her there in February 1920. In March 1921 William Johnson wrote to the Board asking that Alison be allowed to return to Lake Tyers. Mr Ferguson the manager now wrote in support: 'I wish to state that he & his wife have a permanent position here, his wife worries very much over the child, and if the Board can see its way clear to granting their request they are quite fit to look after her. Trusting the board will assist them in their trouble.'²⁵⁴

*Maggie Johnson, Lake Tyers, to Mr Lawson, Premier, Victoria,
October, 1921*²⁵⁵

Dear Sir

I am writing you these few lines asking if you would please be so kind as to use your influence with the Aboriginal Board with regard to my little Daughter who was taken away from us three or four years ago. When the members visited our Mission Station, they promised my Husband & I that they would send our little girl home over two months ago, that was the first week in August we were to have her home, Now we are told that ~~they~~ she are sick & wont be able to return until they are better, Sir, I lost two neices almost under the same circumstances[.] If I cant have her here home with me, there is nothing else for me to do

but leave the Station, the Board promises one thing & generally do another, they forget that we are human

Hoping you will do your best for my child

Thanking you in anticipation

I beg to remain Sir,

yours sincerely

(Mrs) M. Johnson

*Maggie Johnson, Lake Tyers, to Mr Lawson, Premier, Victoria,
10 October, 1921²⁵⁶*

Dear Sir

I am writing you these few lines to you asking if you would please be so kind as to use your influence with the Aboriginal Board with regard of my little Daughter who is at the Convent I dont know whether she is very ill with influenza or not. Mr Parker was down here last Sunday & he told me about her she had influenza. I dont know whether she is ill or not[;] at any rate they promised me that they would send her home soon after the meeting was over[;] she might be very ill at the Convent & Im worrying myself to death over her. Dear Sir I wish you could assist me. I would like you to see about her & please to let me know at once

I beg to remain Sir

Yours Sincerely

Maggie Johnson

The Premier forwarded Maggie's two letters to the Board. The Secretary wrote to Mr Ferguson about the matter, stating that 'the Board views with disfavor applications being sent to other Departments except through the Manager of the station or the Board'. Ferguson replied that he thought other people had influenced Maggie and that the first letter was actually written by Jack Egan.

The BPA finally arranged for Alison Johnson to return to Lake Tyers on 20 December 1921.

Annie McDonald

In 1922 Annie and Alf McDonald were staying in the Melbourne suburb of Richmond for a holiday. The Board allowed John Egan to visit them on condition that he receive no rations or clothing from the Board while he was there.

*Annie McDonald, Richmond, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
6 June, 1922²⁵⁷*

Dear Sir

Your letter to hand re John Egan coming to live with me for a holidays[.] I might say he is more than welcome & will be as comfortable here with me as he could wish[;] the poor fellow has had so

little pleasure owing to his being a cripple[;] we are looking forward to give him as good a time as ever we can & making his stay with us as enjoyable as we can. He gets a pension so will not feel he is depending on us entirely[;] even if he were not he would be just as welcome. He can come as soon as it is convenient as long as he lets us know in plenty of time to meet him as he would have to be met with a cab. Thanking you for writing me

I remain
yours truly
Annie McDonald

*Annie McDonald, Richmond, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
11 June, 1922²⁵⁸*

Dear Sir

Your letter re John Egan[;] he does not intend to live with me for good[.] I think his intentions are to go to one of his married sisters at Purnim when he leaves me. Amelia Rose (his sister) was saying that she was going to get him to go & live with her, as he has no one over there to look after his clothes as he has been accustomed to and says he would never want for a home as his other married sister Lucy would be only to glad of his company and she has a comfortable little home near Purnim[.] That was just what Amelia Rose said when she stayed with me a few weeks ago

yours truly
Annie McDonald

Annie McDonald, Richmond, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, June, 1922²⁵⁹

Dear Sir

Please excuse me for not writing sooner but we have all been laid up with the influenza so did not ask John to come till the house was throughly clear of it. Am satisfied to take John under the conditions mentioned so you can let him know[;] hoping it has not put you to any inconvenience,
yours truly

Annie McDonald

Land and Housing

Many of the women letter writers wrote about the importance of having their own land and homes, and an independent life. The letters of Rose Kennedy in 1884 and Emily Stephen in 1904 demonstrate the personal investment and pride which individual Aboriginal women had in their own houses on the mission stations. Emily, returning to Ramahyuck and wanting to live in her cottage again, explained to the Board that 'in the front are all my beautiful flowers'.

As one by one all the stations apart from Lake Tyers were closed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a number of women still living on the missions and stations applied for portions of reserve land. Some women such as Jessie Alberts were granted land; others such as Bessie Rawlings and Jemima Dunolly were refused. It seems the BPA was generally reluctant to allocate land to individuals or families, particularly those whom it considered should live at Lake Tyers. Those who were granted land were not immune from later decisions of the Board. In 1926 Jessie Alberts and Harriet Wyselaskie both wrote worriedly to the Board about its decision to lease out their land to the public.

Other women, through the support of children, managed to leave the stations altogether and obtain private property. In 1917 Agnes Carter left Lake Condah to live on land her son had bought at Dunmore. A few months later Eliza Saunders, also of Lake Condah, planned to use the money she had saved from her son's military allotment to buy a property nearby. The two women were excited at their prospects: Agnes wrote to the Board 'I have craved for years to have a house of my own' while Eliza reflected, 'a woman does love her own little home'. Eliza was unlucky however, and her hopes were dashed. Emily Stephen's aspirations for her own place fared better. In 1920 she wrote to the Board about the home she and her son were building on their land at Dartmoor, '[w]hen our house is finished & some ground dug for a garden we will then have a lovely home'.

Rose Kennedy

*Rose Kennedy, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
4 August, 1884²⁶⁰*

Dear Sir

Please would you kindly inform me how stands the affair about at house that was left to me by my Aunt & Uncle that are both dead[.] I was told that it is not mine & the house was given over to me by a written will, Mr Spieseke wrote out the will, witnessed & signed by Miss Amelia Gregory & myself before my Aunt die.

The house was built by my Uncle when the first missionaries were here[;] when the house was built & finished the missionaries made them understand that the house was their own & when they die it was to be for their children after them (the same as white people) & they had no children & Rebecca being my own Aunt she gave the house & now it is taken from me & give to another.

When I got married I went away with my husband to where he was working for four years & left the house in my father's care, & he got mad & was sent to Ararat Ayslum & when he came back he was very unsettled, but we always got someone to live in it while we where away & when I came back my stepmother was living in it, then she died & it was empty for a while. Then Albert Coombs got married & was given then to him & when I asked to look out for another place as I wanted the place for my old father to stay in but he told me it does not belong to me it belongs to the government. Please to tell me the particulars & when your answer this please to sent it back to me & not to Mr Kramer & I will show it to Mr Kramer. I do not complain of Mr Kramer. Please do not disappoint me by sending it to Mr Kramer.

I am yours obedient
servant

Rose Kennedy

On receipt of Rose's letter Captain Page asked Rev. Kramer, the missionary at Ebenezer, to give him some details on the matter:

*Rev. Kramer, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
12 August, 1884²⁶¹*

Dear Captain Page

Re Rose Kennedy's hut I beg to say that I have had no end of trouble and annoyance owing to the fact that some of these huts are claimed by the blacks as their property which they can do with what they like...In 1875, I think, I wrote to the Board about this matter when I was instructed to tell the Blacks that the huts, standing on station ground were station property. I wish you would help me to get this point settled once and for all by informing Rose to the same effect.

No doubt, when the houses were built they were intended for particular blacks, but the following facts should not be forgotten. [he went on to say that the mission buildings had been built with materials, labour, and rations supplied by the Board]....So that you see, Rose's claim, if she has any at all, is reduced to a minimum.

In 1913 the BPA asked Rose whether she would have her brother's wife Kate to stay with her for a while. Dan and Kate were living at Lake Condah and Kate had been ill.

*Mrs R. Kennedy, Dimboola, to Mr Crawford, manager, Lake Condah,
29 September, 1913²⁶²*

Dear Sir

In answer to your letter in refering to Mrs Cortwine[,] what is the matter with her[?] if she comes here the Board will have to get her a tent[.] I am living in tents[.] I go out washing about the town & will the board allow me something for looking after her

I am dear Sir
yours sincerely
Mrs R Kennedy

The Board decided it would not be beneficial for Kate Cortwine to go to Dimboola after all.

Esther McGuiness

*Friedrich Hagenauer, General Inspector of Aborigines, to Mrs McGuiness,
Ebenezer, Dimboola, 25 March, 1891²⁶³*

Mrs McGuiness

The application from Mrs. McGuiness for a block of land on the aboriginal reserve at Ebenezer has been duly received but cannot be granted before the Board has had more information on the subject.

The question will come before the Board in due time after which inquiry will be made.

With kindest remembrance

F. A. Hagenauer
Gen. Insp. of Aborigines

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs E. McGuiness, Ebenezer, 13 July,
1892²⁶⁴*

Mrs E. McGuiness

Your application of the 27th June for the grant of a separate piece of land belonging to the Ebenezer Aboriginal Reserve, forwarded to this Office, has been considered and as it is against the provisions of the Act of Parliament No 349, I am directed to inform you that the application cannot be granted

I have the honour to be
your obednt servant
W. J. Dichburn

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs McGuinness, Ebenezer,
5 October, 1893²⁶⁵*

My dear friend

Your letter addressed to Mr Ch. M. Officer, Vice Chairman, has been duly considered and I am instructed to inform you that your application cannot be granted

I remain

with best wishes

Yours Truly

F. A. Hagenauer

Bessie Rawlings

In October 1893 Bessie's husband William applied to the BPA for some land at Framlingham. The Secretary, Friedrich Hagenauer, told William Rawlings that he was unable to give him an answer to his application because the Board had to consider the matter first. Hagenauer told him 'I hope soon to visit Framlingham when you can explain to me your view and plan of working the land. I will let you know when I can come.' It would seem that the Rawlings' application was refused by the Board.²⁶⁶

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to William Rawlings,
Framlingham, 5 November, 1896²⁶⁷*

Sir

Your application for land from the Framlingham reserve was duly laid before the Board, but the matter had to be postponed for further consideration. I hope that in due time you will be successful when I shall be very happy to let you know the result

With best wishes

yours truly

F. A. Hagenauer
Secretary

*Bessie Rawlings, Framlingham, to Mr Peacock, Chief Secretary, BPA,
10 November, 1897²⁶⁸*

Sir my husband wishes me to write to you & ask you sir if you know anything about the Board talking about shifting us away from here shortly[;] for what we dont know, sir when you came here you asked us what we would rather do[;] remain here & live just as we are or shift to another station[;] we said we would rather live here as we are & you said very well then that will do, & the former chief secretary mr Deakin wrote a note & sent it with my husband to mr Hagenauer to his office but he was not in so my husband left the note with mr Hagenauer's clerk telling him that my husband was to remain & live on the station. mr murray will tell you all about it[;] he was with my

husband when he went to see the chief secretary for himself. another time mr Hagenauer, mr Camerone & mr Anderson came here on a visit & when these gentlemen came to our house they were talking to us about our rations & our clothing & mr Hagenauer & mr Camerone told us that we ought to go & try & live in some of the township round about here & said that the Board would keep us in ration & clothing all our life time[;] but we told them that we couldnt do it[;] so mr Anderson asked my husband where he was born[;] my husband told him that he was born down at Allenford[;] so mr Camerone and mr Anderson [said] oh well that will do[;] that is near enough[;] you can remain here[;] the Board wont trouble you any more[;] so you see sir not withstanding all this mr Hagenauer will not leave us alone, he is always at us to leave this place[.] I dont know how it is that he do not trouble the others to go away from here but he gave them all a bit of land to live on & we asked him for a bit of land to live the same as the others did[;] we asked for that peace of land where mrs Brown is living on now & mr Brown & his wife wanted the peace of ground on the other side of a little creek in front of mr Wylasky's & Mr Brown wrote & told mr Hagenauer to let us have the ground where they are living now as we wanted that peace & Mr Brown told mr Hagenauer to let him have the peace across the creek front of Mr Wylasky but mr Hagenauer said no that peace will do Mrs Austin & told mr Brown to have the peace where he is now[;] so you see sir mr Hagenauer has done us out of a bit of land[;] we cant make mr Hagenauer out at all[;] the only thing he told my husband that has a weak point that means drink[;] we [?] mr Hagenauer here once when he spoke to us about the Board wanting us to leave this station[;] that was all mr Hagenauer could tell my husband about why[;] the others drink, mr Brown is still drinking nearly every day & mr Wylasky has only this year knocked off drinking & what improvement have the done is nothing to speak of from the time the ground was given to them[;] our old friend here wants us to ask you try & get us the peace between mr Wylaskys & mr George Edwards[,] the same peace we wrote to mr Hagenauer for some time ago[;] the only answer we got was that (he) mr Hagenauer had placed our letter for land before the Board & was postponed for another time & we ave heard nothing of it since & when mr Hagenauer came here he said nothing to me about the land[;] but he told me to tell my husband to get a peace of land from the Agriculture villiage settlement & mr Hagenauer told me that it woudent cost as much money to get a bit of ground with & that the Board will keep us in rations & clothing the same as here[;] but we want a peace that wont cost us anything at all for we have no money to bye or rent a peace of ground with & the peaces of land on the Agriculture that is left is nothing but a mass of forest[;] but if mr Hagenauer wants us to leave this little spot that we are living on now let the Board grant us the peace we ask for please for once[;] we hardly trouble the Board for anything. Now mr Hagenauer spoke to me about my girl that mrs Goode wrote to him about[;] now

mrs Goode should have looked at her own two neaces for they are no better than my girls are[;] another thing mrs Goodes neaces & nephews & her brothers they are no right here on this place[;] condah is the place they should gone to when mrs brother became a widower[;] now this little home was left for us few were remaining here & not for strangers. mr Hagenauer said when he was here that there was a lot of letters gone to the Board with out any names to them & if there is anything in them about us I can say this much that they are all untrue.

I am yours
Bessie Rawlings
Please send an answer

The Board refused Bessie's request, having decided unanimously that the Rawlings should be removed from Framlingham under an Order-in-Council. In 1898 the BPA moved Bessie and William to Lake Condah.²⁶⁹ In 1900 Bessie and William decided to leave Lake Condah and earn their own living. The Board rescinded the Order-in-Council on the condition that the Rawlings not ask the Board for help. It seems that the Rawlings returned to the Framlingham district.

*Bessie Rawlings, Purnim, to Mr J. Murray, Chief Secretary,
April, 1913²⁷⁰*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines asking if you kindly will see & get us a bit of land of this Reserve here as we would like to have a bit of land here[;] some of our white friends told my husband to write to you & said that we should ask for the piece that the school house is on & said we should ask for fifty acres of land for your family & yourself & wife as well as the others for they have got more land of the station piece[;] so now I'm writing for bit of land to you Mr Murray[;] not that we dont want them to have any more[;] we just want a bit of land to call our own a home & has for the school house of course we are staying in the two rooms & the school room itself we all use as a church for service on Sundays[;] so do kindly oblige us dear sir[;] if young men can get a piece we ought to

I am your humble servant Bessie Rawlings

The Board referred Bessie's request to Constable Shoebridge at Woodford. He replied that he thought the request should not be granted because the school building was required for church purposes; also the land was the best of the reserve and was used for stock to graze on. The Board thereupon informed Bessie that her request could not be granted.

In September 1919 the Rawlings' house and the schoolroom to which their house was attached on the mission were destroyed in a fire. They lost all their belongings. After the fire Bessie went to stay with her daughter while William camped under several sheets of iron roofing where their house had once stood. Soon afterwards a petition

was sent to the Victorian Parliament by the Framlingham Aborigines and a number of white residents of the Warrnambool area, asking that a new school building be erected on the mission. Bessie was the first to sign her name on the petition, which stated that 'the Aborigines are very desirous to remain at Framlingham & altogether opposed to removing to Lake Tyers Station'. They wanted a new school room for the purposes of carrying on worship and Sunday school. The BPA, however, saw the recent homelessness of the Rawlings as an opportunity to remove them to Lake Tyers. In early October the Secretary informed Constable Harvey, the local guardian at Framlingham, that the Rawlings should move to Lake Tyers and enclosed two train tickets. However, Bessie and William refused to leave and they were supported in this action by Walter Ward of Cudgee and by Harvey himself:

Walter Ward, Cudgee, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 9 October, 1919

I understand that the Board has sent a pass for them to go away to Lake Tyers. Mrs Rawlings, who is a very nice woman, & whose son Charlie [William], after gaining the MM., was killed at the war, has been to see me, & says she desires very much to be allowed to remain here. Her daughters, married & single, reside here with their children, & both Mr & Mrs Rawlings would be very grieved to leave. Mrs R. tells me that Blair's house, nearby, is becoming vacant very soon, as he & his wife are removing to Wyselaskie's place, owing to Mrs Blair's growing infirmity; & that they could occupy that house. She says further that if necessary, she & her husband will support themselves. I hope this may not be necessary. I would like to request the Board to give some sympathetic consideration to these matters. Personally, I would be sorry to see this couple obliged to go so far away from their children & grandchildren when the evening of their lives is upon them.

Constable Harvey, local guardian, Framlingham, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 10 October, 1919

I visited the Framlingham camp and saw them and they totally declined to leave here informing me that they would sooner leave the board altogether than go to Lake Tyers. These people were born on the Camp and no doubt feel the position very keen and have asked me to write and implore the Board to reconsider their views on the matter. Perhaps they may be able to remain here.

Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Constable Harvey, local guardian, Framlingham, 13 October, 1919

Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, stating that Mr. and Mrs. Rawlings do not desire to leave the Framlingham Aboriginal Reserve, and have to inquire where Mr. and

Mrs. Rawlings would be accommodated if they remained at Framlingham as it is against the policy of the Board to erect any buildings other than at Lake Tyers.

*Constable Harvey, local guardian, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
3 November, 1919*

I have to report that Wm Rawlings & wife are living at Blairs pending final results of their future welfare. Mrs Rawlings has made an application to me for the use of the burnt roofing iron to utilise same for a small place to live in. What will I do with the iron[?] it is quite saleable

Harvey returned the Board's passes for the Rawlings to leave Warrnambool with the comment 'Rawlings refused to leave Framlingham'.

Emily Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Gippsland Hospital, Sale, to Vice Chairman, BPA,
23 June 1904²⁷¹*

Dear Sir

Please would you kindly grant permission to my children & myself to return to Ramahyuck as I'm not able to go out to work my health not permitting, I am now six weeks in the Hospital & do not know when I'm able to come out, & I would feel very grateful indeed if you allowed my children to return to Ramahyuck; as they are not able to look after themselves[.] My eldest son is also in here & it may take a little while before he gets out[;] so far we are progressing favourably. Another request I wish you to grant me, is, may we live in the same cottage that we had, at present Otto Login is in it; it is a four roomed cottage & we having a large family it is more suitable for us. Otto Login has only 2 little girls[.] not a large family. I also had a wire netting fence put at the back for a garden & in the front are all my beautiful flowers[.] You having visited Ramahyuck will know where we lived. Otto lived in a two roomed cottage beside us[.] When Harry came in to see me told me & wished me to ask the Board if we could go back into our own cottage. I'm sorry to trouble you[.] Trusting to have a favourable reply

I remain yours
respectfully
Emily Milton Stephen

Mr Ditchburn replied to Emily that the matter would have to be considered by the Board, as '[b]y leaving Ramahyuck in the manner you did, you forfeited all your claims, but I feel sure that your old friends Mr & Mrs Hagenauer will deal kindly with you in all matters,

provided you act and live differently than when you were previously at the station.'

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
23 May, 1918²⁷²*

Dear Sir

In reply to your letter, wishing to know the names, ages, & number of children of my family. At present Maud Emily Mullett, my eldest child – age 37 years[,] 3 children[:]Charlotte Mary Blanche age 13 yrs[,] Nellie age 7 years[,] Rita 5 yrs[:] Bertie age 34 yrs[,] his wife Polly 29 yrs, one child Mary Elizabeth age 7 yrs[:] Fanny age 32 yrs[,] her husband Hector Laurence Bull [whose] age I do not know[:] Alfred & his wife you saw up at Antwerp his age 27 yrs his wife's age I do not know[:] Mary Blanche age 23 yrs[,] her husband Cornelius James Coombs age [?], one child named after his father age 10 months[:] my youngest child Gilbert Theodore Haxell age 19 yrs who is at present in England, left here 4th August 1917[:] my age 58 yrs. Maud Mullett said she would like to go to L. Tyers to live if there was any possibility of her getting her children: if possible I think it would be a great chance for her: she has been here since March & I think the coming away from town has done her good[.] Fanny & Hector are away at present down at Purnim may be back shortly. what they will do we do not know considering it would be best for them to accept[.] About Bert & his family & Blanche her husband & myself we thank the members very sincerely, but we would all rather battle on out among white people: Corney says he has been out in the world for 16 yrs & he would rather battle on. It seems strange this offer coming to us a few days before it came, we were talking about getting a bit of land down at Dartmoor about 2 or 3 acres, when we were down there for a holiday a while back, Corney heard land was cheap, so we thought we would try to get an acre or two. & I said, yes I will write into the Board & ask them if they would help us with some wire-netting & windows. perhaps they will help, so before I could write we got your letter. I thought if the Board saw that we wished to make a home for ourselves that they would gladly help us. Mr Parker I do not think I am wrong in saying it is much better to be on your own. than among a crowd especially your own people, further away so much the better. I hope the Members wont think us ungrateful because we are not & dear sir you will quite understand what I mean[:] it is best to remain where we are and battle along: And if the Members could help us in the way I mentioned to you, that would indeed be a help to make us independent. I may say that not far from Dartmoor 5 or 6 miles I think at Winnap is a saw mill & we thought to get waste timber to build a house if we get the bit of land. I did not answer at once because we were thinking very deeply over it & came to the conclusion it is best to remain this side. Mr Parker I hope you do not think that we are foolish because we wish & are going to try to get on[.] Corney is now well again & getting into work[.]

he was unable to work for a very long time. Bertie & his wife have had a sad loss, their son Gason died 1st of May after an illness of nine weeks[;] the mother was in the hospital at the time of his death, she is now getting better[;] she has been in about 7 weeks. it was a great grief to us all[;] he was 10 years old[.] Bertie has a nasty cold at present, colds seem to be going about. I will now draw to a close once again thanking you kindly & would you please reply if possible

I remain yours respectfully
Emily Milton Stephen

Mr Parker sent Emily a letter commending her family's desire to be independent of station life. He thought the Board would be sympathetic to her request.

Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 25 June, 1919²⁷³

Dear Sir

I received your letter of 19th Inst., Monday afternoon, notifying me of the parcel you were sending addressed to the Heywood R. St, I asked the Stn. Mistress to phone to Heywood asking them to forward the parcel on to here by the night train, Tuesday morning I went up to see if the parcel came. she told me yes & I was told I had to pay 1/7 on it, but when I brought it home & opened, it was not for me but for Evelyn Stephen at Antwerp, it seemed this parcel was from Dimboola addressed to Miss E. Stephen Dartmoor & that was the reason why I had to pay 1/7 on it coming from there to here, also in it was a tag with Mr R. Kinnear Antwerp via Dimboola & as I said Mrs Evelyn Stephen, the E crossed out & her Christian name put: parcel contained 1 blanket-8yds[.] dress-4 yds[.] petticoating-5 yds[.] flannel[.] 1 pr boots & another bundle of flannel I suppose for her little child: so will you kindly tell me what to do with the parcel, it is from Pentridge, also I never received the parcel from you yet: on the 14th I received a parcel from Pentridge & the 13th a letter containing the wrong lists which I sent back & a letter to you telling you about the mistake. so please let me know what to do[;] also will you kindly let us know if the members are willing to help us or not. If so we would be only too pleased. my son-in-law has to pay his way as he makes the money. he has been employed on the railway line, at one time he had about 15 days & this time 18 days[;] tomorrow he finishes & perhaps later he may get more work on the line repairing & since here has had other jobs potato digging & some ploughing, as I said he has to pay as he goes. he got a coil of black wire coil of barbed wire (heavy) & paid a man to get posts as he was busy working[;] bought some timber to build a house & we thought if the members would kindly give him a little assistance to get on. The reason why we ask is by the end of Sept. he has to have a house put up, a good fence round & a 1/4 acre of land under cultivation those are the conditions of the licence, we have 3 acres of land under the garden sit act. We are told that we have a very good bit of land &

will grow almost anything[.] We are living in a home made with tarred bags & some bark, it is a makeshift until we get a house. I mentioned in a letter to you that Bertie, his wife, Mary & the baby are down here. Mary has started to go to school here. I thought that I would let you know how we are faring & if you could kindly use your influence on our behalf to help us. The people about here are very kind to us[;] one man is going to lend his horse & plough & another is going to show Corney how to put up the house, & another to show him how to plant potatoes[;] so don't you think that is very kind of them[?]

Trusting to hear a favourable reply re help

P.S. Please when sending

yrs respectfully

anything address to

E. M. Stephen

Dartmoor

In August 1919 Emily applied for material from Lake Condah station to build the home at Dartmoor.

*Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
9 February, 1920²⁷⁴*

Dear Sir

This is in answer to your note the 23rd of last month telling Evelyn that her order was transferred from Antwerp to Jas Thomson & Co Hamilton: today is the 9th of Feb. & we have received no goods or rations yet[;] neither my order or Evelyn's[.] I thought I would write & let you know[;] never have we been kept waiting for our goods[.] I also wished to know dear Sir do not Berts two little girls get rations[.] Bert has not done well with shearing[;] he only came in for the last week or two at a shed & shearing was almost finished when he left here 1st Nov. & all sheds were nearing the finish & were full handed. he has been home could not get any employment about here as people do their own work or help one another[;] he will be helping to finish the house[.] And please thank Mr Callaway very much for the roofing[;] it will be most acceptable[.] Bert had been down getting it[.] I wrote & asked Constable Graham if he thought that there would be any spare doors or windows & spouting but he did not hear yet. Bertie's baby girl is growing nicely & Mary is getting a big girl. I have not been too well[.] I had to go to the Doctor[.] I was simply run down[.] I suppose reaction after all the worry & trouble this last week[.] I am feeling much better to what I was[.] the Doctor said I had high blood pressure & to be careful not to stoop too much or lift heavy weights, but how can a person be careful[;] it is part of daily life & I could not keep quiet must be busy at something or other. Oh it is lovely out here in the bush[;] we are very lucky to have beautiful fresh water to drink & use[;] in fact it is spring water clear as crystal & cool on the hottest day[.] When our house is finished & some ground dug for a garden we will then have a

lovely home so quiet & peaceful & the scenery lovely[.] I will now conclude with kind respects

yrs respectfully
E. M. Stephen

Mr Parker inquired with the Hamilton storekeeper about Emily's rations and found the storekeeper had missed the order. The orders were sent again.

*Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
4 March, 1920²⁷⁵*

Dear Sir

Do you think that the members of the Board would have any objection to Jack Mullett to come over to help Bertie to finish off our house (that is if Jack is not too busy for Mr Robarts)[.] The footballers were to have a working bee to finish the house, but I think each one is too busy on their own land to have time for a working bee, we have heard nothing more about it; so I thought if Bertie could finish it with the help of Jack Mullett who is a good carpenter & could shew Bertie what to do as Bertie does not know much about carpentaring[.] We would be so obliged if Jack would come as the house could be finished before the Winter sets in[.] The bag house what we are living in is really weather worn & wont stand much longer. One Saturday afternoon before Xmas some men came to do some of the house & were to come again but they never so I said I think they had too much to do for themselves, So dear Sir if you can help us in seeing if Jack is able to come & if a pass could be granted to him to come over please. I've not got the money from the military yet, back pay of the Separation Allowance but am expecting it any day. When I get it we will pay Jack for the work & would have paid his fare over[.] If you can help us in our trouble I would be so pleased[.] Ask Mr Callaway[;] tell him that Mrs Stephen would be so grateful if they would help us. Shall I write to Jack & ask him to come if Mr Robarts can spare him. I did not like to write to him without first writing to you. with kind regards

I remain yrs respectfully
E. M. Stephen

Trusting to hear a favourable reply

Mr Parker replied that Jack Mullett had been ill and could not undertake the work.

Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 24 May, 1920²⁷⁶

Dear Sir

I am answering your letter which I received this afternoon. I did not think that Bertie was able to build by himself (that was why I asked

for Jack Mullett as wished the building to be finished before winter & the wet weather set in) but Bertie has made a good job of it & I only hope he'll be able to finish it before he goes to Lake Tyers. he has the chimney to put up & the windows & doors to put in & the roofing on the two bedrooms[;] he has put the roofing that he got from Condah on the kitchen & when all is finished I think we will have a very comfortable little home[;] after a while we will have to get it all lined of ceiling Boards if we will be able to make up the money. We hope to be able to get some ploughing to be done after a while & to put potatoes in when the time comes. Do you think dear Sir that I would be able to get some wire netting second hand netting (we wish to make a bit of garden) any where. I had a letter from the Defence Department about the war leave Gratuity asking if Mr Stephens is alive & desires that I should collect the whole amount of money as both parents are equally entitled there to & a letter from him would be much appreciated by Defence Department. I wrote & told them that I do not live with him since 1914 & how we are situated struggling to make a home & that I've never had any money from my husband since 1913 & that I never compelled him to maintain me as he was in no position & what ever he earned he drank & gambled & was so often in Gaol & that now he was on the Lake Tyers Settlement where he was well looked after & had everything & that he would be kept from drinking if possible[.] I know full well if Harry gets that money he will only squander & gamble it (good money wasted where as it would help us to make our home comfortable[.] I will have to pay a white man to plough & pay for the windows & doors & iron roofing for the bedrooms[.] lime for the building of the chimney[.] I feel sad when I think of the waste in giving it to Harry[;] poor Gillie gave his life & his father will benefit by it[.] Gillie went over the sea did his bit by going[;] he may never have gone to the front I don't think but he was kept busy in England[;] came home invalided fit for nothing & to think his money will be wasted[;] ah well I suppose it cannot be helped[.] I told them that Harry would never agree for me to draw the money between the lines I never said to them but that is how I look at it, do you think that I am right or wrong in saying what I do[?] I will now close my respects to Mr Callaway & yourself

I remain yrs respectfully
Emily M. Stephen

We heard some time back about Easter time that Dave Mullett had shot himself[.] is that true[?] has Maud tried to do better & look after her children. I do not know where they are[;] would you kindly let me know about Dave[.]

The Board referred the matter of Emily's husband to the manager of Lake Tyers who replied that Harry Stephen was a confirmed drunkard

and gambler. Like Emily he did not think it was good for Harry to get the gratuity money.

Jemima Dunnolly

Jemima Dunolly, Coranderrk, to Secretary, BPA, January, 1912²⁷⁷

Sir

I have the honour to apply through you for a block of land contained on the last side of the Coranderrk Reserve along the Boggy Creek Road. I have been a resident of Coranderrk for the last 40 years and as reports of former managers will show my character will bear the closest scrutiny[.] My late husband (Mr R. Wandin Senr) was until the time of his death one of the main stays of the late manager Mr J. Shaw and I am of the opinion now that I would like a home of my own with the help of the Board for Protection of Aborigines for which I think I am now justly entitled to. I have daughters rising into womanhood now & these I would like to be a little more under my control for when on the station when they go out to service it is the last control of mothers lost, for as you know that they are rarely allowed back again even for a holiday. For the sake of my girls I would like a home of my own & if the government would see their way clear to giving me a home I would feel greatly indebted for the favour & 3 years rations and clothing[.] Thanking you in anticipation

I would like 50 acres
to make a living
as well

I am
yours respectfully
Mrs T Dunolly

Mr Robarts advocated that the Board grant the Dunollys the use of 20 acres of land, rations for one year, and a cow. Tom Dunolly would build his own house. The Board rejected this idea, suggesting that the Dunollys ascertain whether there was any other land available in the district.

Mr & Mrs Dunolly, Coranderrk, to Secretary, BPA, 4 March, 1912²⁷⁸

Sir

We have made inquiries & a look around for some land but cannot find any so we have to give up all hopes and have to be contented where we are.

We remain
your Obedient Servants
Mr & Mrs Dunolly

Amelia Rose

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
16 February, 1916²⁷⁹*

....the Board refuses us an acre of ground to Build a place on[.] I dont know why they refuse[;] do you know any reason they dont. I know you will say theres the mission station if you want a home[.] I saw enough of Condah gambling & two-up any spare time they have[.] I would never take my children in a mission[;] so Mr Ditchbourne put my case before the Board once more[;] if they only allow us an acre Ill be satisfied[;] or else tell me the real reason they wont grant it to me & I'll be satisfied if it is a reasonable one. If some people here can have homes I dont see why an acre would be much out of the road. Another thing Beatrice Alberts is living with a white man not far from the station & half the time she is living with Mrs Alberts & her two children so they seem to be allowed a home & yet we are always refused. Dear Mr Ditchburn write soon and answer this letter & tell us you will try & do your best for us some of my white friends told me to write to the Board once more & they will see if they can do anything for us

I remain yours truly
Amelia Rose

Amelia's request to occupy a portion of the Framlingham reserve was refused.

Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 25 March, 1917²⁸⁰

Dear Sir

After the Board had visited us I was thinking that if they gave us any help at all in the way of a peice of ground I thought that it would be better to help me & my children independent of my husband as he is a serious drawback to us on account of his drunken habits as Mr Johnson our gaurdian will tell you. he does not provide for us as a family at all[;] whatever he makes half must go for the drink. I would like to have a few acres of ground & if the board would put a little place on it for us my son & I would be willing to pay a little rent for it to the Board. as I have just the two boys to depend on to help me & that is more than I can say of my husband[;] he keeps straght for a week or two & then breaks out again & I tell you thats very discouraging to me. so dear Sir I hope the Board will help me more for my children's sake thats growing up than for anything else. I have to work very hard[.] I go out washing for the white neighbours three or four times a week so that between me & my son we are able to keep the four little ones at school[;] of course I will be getting a help from my second son only he

is not doing too much since he had the meningitis but he will be able soon to help us too. hoping to hear from you soon

I remain
yours truly
Amelia Rose

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
17 December, 1924²⁸¹*

Dear Sir

I was very sorry to hear that the Board had decided to sell Mrs Goods old home. Now Sir my sister Mrs Young has lived there since she was two years old also J. Egan in his turn[;] in fact eight of us were reared up in that home after our mother died & now they want to turn Hilda Mrs Young out[.] I suppose its on account of her husband[;] she was unlucky to marry him[;] same as a good many whites make a mistake & she has looked after Mrs Good to the last & another I think she can claim one spot, as our brother fought & died for his country in the late war & I am sure that all right minded people will see that she gets a fair deal as she is well respected in the neighbourhood. what ever her husband does is not her fault. & another thing our brother J. Egan is a cripple only one leg & what harm would they do any more than the others that reside on the place. I have never troubled the Board since my family has grown up so I hope that the Board wont think my letter is an offence to them but that they will look over see things in a different light & allow they both to stay on[.] The house is that old its not worth much now & they milk a few cows & send their cream to the factory[;] her husband doesnt do a thing to help them[;] more often away than a home[;] so Dear Sir put this letter to the Board & let me know their decision as soon as it is convenient. trusting they will see into the matter & settle things once & for all

I remain yours truly
Amelia Rose

After many letters written to the Board by John Egan the Board decided in July 1925 that he could remain in the cottage at Framlingham, subject to his good behaviour.

Agnes Carter

Agnes Carter, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 18 January, 1917²⁸²

Sir

I am sending in my application to leave Lake Condah with my two sons aged 32 years and 16 years and also my nephew Wallace Taylor 15 years. My son in South Australia has bought five acre of Dunmore land and paid £25 for it[.] And the two sons here wish to go and work on farms and support themselves and be with me when they can.

I am 60 years of age and I ask you to please give me one of the empty two roomed wooden houses with a tank[,] also One adult ration for myself[.] I have craved for years to have a house of my own and not one word can be said against me or my family for bad behaviour. Mr Stahle and his wife always considered me their right hand for years[.] And the present matron says I have been a treasure to her and I will always do what I can to help her if I am off the station if she needs me. For every girl is out to service now and she has no one to help now only school girls. I wish to leave here in May and if I am allowed one of the empty cottages and its tank I can get my son to put it up in his spare time[.] None of my children require support from the Board now but one that is servant at Corrandirk house[;] she had to leave here through bronchitis[.] I will have no [?] plenty of wood and water and will grow plenty vegetables and the thought of having a home of my own makes me feel happy

I am

yrs respectfully

Agnes Carter

The Board gave Agnes permission to leave and also to take one of the spare cottages to Dunmore.

Agnes Carter, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 8 March, 1917²⁸³

Dear Sir

I write you these few lines to thank you for your kindness to me in granting my application for a cottage & rations to put on my land at Dunmore

Also I wish to thank you for all the years which you have looked after me & my family on the station[.]

I will get the cottage removed as soon as possible, and I hope before Winter to be able to go there to live[;] so thanking you for your kindness to me & my family

I remain Sir

yours respectfully

Agnes Carter

Eliza Saunders

Eliza's son Chris enlisted in the AIF in 1915. She received his military allotment during the time he was on service.

Eliza Saunders, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 29 August, 1917²⁸⁴

Sir

I write to ask you to grant me the favor of continued rations as I am buying a nice new two roomed cottage and three quarter acre of land[,] fenced secure with paling[,] new large tank and lovely stove for £50 cash as my only son and only single child has been serving his countrys good since May 1915. and I have received £1-8-0 weekly and

have saved it for my long looked for wish a home of our own if he is spared and if not I have secured the service of a grown girl to live with me and it is having to feed a second person that I will be very grateful to you if you continue allowing me one adult ration and I also wish much to thank you deeply for your great goodness to me for years. I feel a sadness leaving the station but a woman does love her own little home and gentlemen in Heywood says I have a great bargain and I have the money ready. I wait for your reply[;] can I leave the station[;] I also have one ration[;] please reply very soon as the deeds are waiting to be transferred[;] my next door neighbour is selling me the house[;] it is lovely land for vegetables growing[;] I have fowls also, I want to go end of September[;] the girl is with me now ready to go with me now[.] I must not for get Mr & Mrs Galbraith kindness to me during the last too years and half[.] She has been a great comfort to me she have shared my trouble & I shall miss her very much both her & Mr Galbraith[;] they are always ready to help those on the mission & those who are off if they call on them sick

So I must close hoping
to hear from you soon
your most humble servant

Eliza Saunders age 64

Several days before Eliza wrote this letter Constable Graham of Heywood reported to the Board that it had come to his knowledge that arrangements were being made by Mrs Galbraith to purchase a house for Eliza Saunders. He stated that Saunders was a cripple and unable to move about without assistance. Graham believed it would be advisable not to allow her to move from the station: 'I have been requested by her aboriginal friends, to endeavour, to stop her leaving the station'. While the BPA sought further advice from the manager at Lake Condah the house was sold to someone else in Heywood.

*Eliza Saunders, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 1 September, 1917*²⁸⁵

Sir

I write to tell you that I am very angry over the Matron being accused of helping me to leave the station[;] she would take no hand in it[;] only carried a message from me as I am a cripple and object to under handed ways in carrying messages by natives as jealousy is the only reason they had in stopping me. Only for Mrs Galbraith I would be living in the house weeks ago[;] she was troubled over me leaving without your consent & because I had no grown girl she could have lent me £20 and she would not because I want to get off at once. if black people that went here worked instead of drive about minding other people business they would do better[;] my home is the only bit of brightness[;] the matron has she says I am well read I so intelligent[.] I longed for a home and weeping bitterly now[;] my son wanted it if he returned[;] also I am getting this letter written by a friend but I sign it

and order every word. The black that went to constable Graham for nothing[;] they alway make a few shilling by me being on the station

get paid by me
for anything
they do I even
paid one of them
every fortnight to
bring my military
pay

Eliza Saunders

The BPA Secretary advised the manager at Lake Condah that Mrs Saunders should remain on the station until her son returned and then he could make arrangements for her accommodation outside if he so desired. In January 1918 the Board informed Mr Galbraith that Eliza's rations were to cease at the end of the month in view of the fact that she was receiving military pay. Mr Galbraith advised the Board to send Eliza to a Benevolent Institution because she was crippled and there was no one to attend to her properly on the station. The Board made enquiries and informed Mr Galbraith in February that the asylum at Cheltenham was willing to take Eliza. Galbraith reported that Eliza 'declined the offer & wishes to go back to her native land'. In March 1918 Eliza left for Port McDonnell in South Australia, taking Mabel Arden to look after her.²⁸⁶ In July 1918 Mrs Galbraith visited Eliza who was very ill with rheumatism. According to Mrs Galbraith, Eliza still intended to buy a block of land near Lake Condah. Mrs Galbraith asked the Board to allow Eliza to return to Lake Condah to live with Louise White until the station was broken up. However Mr Galbraith did not think that the Board should be called upon to support Eliza as she was receiving the military pay and was making arrangements to receive the old age pension.²⁸⁷

Flora Stewart

*Flora Stewart, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, June, 1918*²⁸⁸

Dear Sir

I am writing to you feeling very worried to hear today from Mrs King that you have agreed for her to have my mother, it is a strange wish to separate a mother from her only living child, and my old mother has been so peaceful, and the great favorite with all in charge here, Mr and Mrs Galbraith, Mr and Mrs Stahle and Mrs Crawford all love my mother and Maud, they are all that will be left, and I am expected to in her old age nearly 80 to see her go to a stranger, while I her only daughter, am only middle-aged about 47 am not allowed first chance. Now I put my case before you. I have consulted the manager, and he and my husband who is the best worker on the place, steady and every day to his work, have inspected a piece of land about five

acres that is idle for years. I ask you kindly to grant me this, and house one cow, also to graze it, and I will take my old mother, and Maud, our own furniture, fowls, tools, buggy, and one horse. We have worked hard and bought all our own things for years. We will all be happy together, and mother and Maud McDuff are very excited and happy at the thought of it, and if it would not be asking too much, a cart and horse for carting our wood, my husband is good at building house, and will make a good garden. I am much younger than my husband, but he is a good worker. I beseech you not to make my old mother's last days on earth wretched by separating us, and she wishes to live at Lake Condah to the last. I may say that Mrs King is not an aboriginal and she asks for too much who have no right whatever. I am just asking you if you would grant me all this which I ask for. So with kindest regards

I am
yours respectful
Flora Stewart

Jessie Alberts

Jessie Alberts, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 21 October, 1926²⁸⁹

Dear Sir

I have been informed by Constable Thomas that my piece of land containing eighty acres, which was given to me by the Board over twenty years ago for my own use, and I was told by the Board that it was to be mine as long as I lived, and now we hear that they are going to let my land be rented, please let me know if it is true, and if so, would you be so kind as to see the Board at the next meeting if they would give me the first chance of renting my land, hoping you will oblige.

I am
yours respectfully
Mrs Jessie Albert

The Board informed Jessie that it had decided to lease a portion of the reserve for depasturing purposes and that she would be able to submit a tender for leasing the land as soon as calls for tenders were advertised in the local newspapers.

Harriet Wyselaskie

*Mrs H. Wyselaskie, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
21 October, 1926²⁹⁰*

Dear Sir

I am just writing these few lines to you, asking if it is true that all our land is going to be rented, please sir is it true, I always thought the land was given to us older ones untill we die, I never

thought that the Board would do such a thing as that, could they not wait untill we are dead and are all gone; as my husband had the land, I only wish that the Board would not be too hard on us, and we would be only too glad to rent it of them as long as it was not too much, please place this before the Board and please let me know.

I am
yours with best regards
Mrs H Wyselaskie

As he had informed Jessie Alberts, the Secretary told Harriet Wyselaskie that it had been decided to lease a portion of the reserve for depasturing purposes. Harriet's son John Couzens wrote to the Board asking whether he could rent the land his mother was living on because she did not have enough money herself to pay rent. The Secretary replied that John would be able to submit a tender for leasing the land as soon as it was advertised in the local newspapers.

Asserting Personal Freedom

The Victorian Government invested the BPA with almost complete power over the lives of Aboriginal people during the period covered by this collection. Initially the Board, and, more directly, the missionaries and station managers, exercised their authority in a paternalistic way, out of a conviction that they knew what was best for the Aborigines. This approach was often oppressive; although in the 1870s and 1880s, before the 1886 Act, the Board paid some attention to Aboriginal concerns. With the decline of church and humanitarian interest in the Aborigines in the early twentieth century, mission administrators became increasingly autocratic and the Board's policies ever more stringent. Many decisions made by the authorities caused individual Aborigines great distress. Their choice was whether to struggle or submit. As the letters demonstrate, many women struggled. Indeed, writing letters was a crucial means by which the women sought to assert their personal freedom.

Some women concluded it was better to try to manage away from the stations altogether. Choosing to live amongst white settlements away from the missions meant facing a hard life; unemployment, poverty and sickness frequently drew the women and their families back onto the missions. In the 1880s Bessy Cameron wrote a number of letters to the Board, some stating her desire to be independent of the BPA, yet others explaining the difficulties that she and her family faced surviving on their own. Bessy was determined, however. In October 1883 the missionary at Ramahyuck, Friedrich Hagenauer, wrote, 'I have no doubt that she will do her best to keep away from the control of the stations'. In 1896, after a disagreement with Hagenauer at Ramahyuck, Agnes McCreddie wrote to the Premier of Victoria, asking him to assist her family in moving away from the station. She explained, 'I would rather live in a camp...than live here any longer'.

Often leaving the missions was not an option. As long as they lived on the missions women such as Emily Stephen and Mary Austin resolved to stand their ground against the interference of the Board and managers in their families' lives. Over 1910 and 1911 Emily Stephen fought a battle against Mr Howe, the manager of Lake Tyers, for control of her daughter's working arrangements on the station. The result was her banishment from the station and separation from her children. In 1916 Mary Austin also objected to the authorities' decisions about her children's employment. She told the matron of Lake Condah that she was not going to rear children for the benefit of the Board or managers.

A number of the letter writers were forced to live on a station or in an institution against their will. In 1917, out of desperation, Maggie Mobourne wrote to the Superintendent of Police in Melbourne wanting

to know if the Board was empowered to keep her at Lake Tyers and how long it could do so. Maggie was not permitted to leave the station and she died not long afterwards. A similarly sad story is that of a young woman, Minna Hood, whom the Board placed in the Oakleigh reformatory after her father died. In 1921 she asked the Board if she could live at Coranderrk. The Board refused but allowed her a holiday at Lake Tyers instead. After a brief stay on the station Minna was returned to the Reformatory, where she died in June 1921. Maggie's and Minna's deaths reflect the damaging impact of loss of freedom on individuals' emotional and physical well-being.

Louisa Briggs

*Carl Kramer, missionary, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
13 August, 1879²⁹¹*

Dear Captain Page

I am sure you were deeply grieved to learn about Maggie Briggs' bad behaviour while in the Horsham Hospital. I was going to trouble you with a long account of the three eldest Briggs children's further misdeeds which led to the turn-over I had with Mrs. Briggs on Monday but shall forbear, Mrs. Briggs and the two girls having promised submission to the rules of the place and the boy, I believe, will do the same shortly. I may however, just mention what their objectionable behaviour consisted in, viz going without my knowledge and consent after nightfall to evening parties and dancing with unprincipled young white, and blackfellows, at a neighbouring station and, perhaps, returning home just before break of day accompanied by those fellows.

*Mrs Briggs, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
31 October, 1881²⁹²*

Dear Sir

I received your kind and welcome letter and was very glad to hear from you; and also very thankful for your kindness[.] I am sorry to hear that no passes giving out[.] I have no way of coming down if the Board wont pay my way down[;] please would you let me know by next week: I have sent the message to Mrs Buskam what you told me; I am very glad to tell you that Mrs Buskam was in very good health since she came up here; but now she have change her name from Mrs Buskam to Mrs McLennan[;] the week after she got married her and her husband went to the shearing sixteen miles from the mission station she expecting to return back to Coranderrk again by Christmas. I am sorry to hear that some of our people is so silly at Coranderrk making such reports[;] please let me know by next week: if you can: I remembered all the people kindly for you; they all send their kind regards to you[.] Me and my family is quiet well and in good health[.]

Some of these people is not in very good health and some is not expected to live.

I havent much to say at present
so goodbye
dear sir
I am dear Sir
your truly
Mrs Briggs

please write soon

Mr and Mrs Barkley send their best regards [to] you

*Mrs Briggs, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
23 January, 1882²⁹³*

Dear Sir, I have the opportunity of writing these few lines to you; asking please sir if you be kind enough to send me a pass for me & my family and please send it up by Saturday or Tuesday[;] send me the answer back for the pass

I like to get down to Coranderrk by hop picking time[;] send the pass up on the 28[?] of this month for I have been waiting patiently for a answer from you.

Please be sure and let me know by next week; it is very hot up here lately and the place looks very dry and the place is very full[?] there very few of people here now

Mrs McLennan is in very good health.

but she is gotten homesick for Coranderrk and she wishing to be home again[;] perhaps you dont know who I mean[?]

I mean Mrs Buskin

We are all quiet well excepting Mrs Barkley

I conclude with my best regard to you

Remain dear

Sir yours Truly

Mrs Briggs

answer soon.

*Carl Kramer, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
22 February, 1882²⁹⁴*

Mrs Briggs has requested me to write to you and request you on her behalf to send two additional railway passes for her 2 children Polly and Maggie. She says she cannot leave them behind in which opinion I concur, nor has she the money to pay their fees. In complying with her request I beg to ask you kindly to send her the desired passes but, of course; you will know best what to do, and whether she is to get them.

*Mrs Briggs, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
22 October, 1882²⁹⁵*

Mr Capt Page

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to you asking you to go back to Coranderrk Station again[.] I have now...been here about four years[.] I would like to go back again to see my friends and my family again[;] please would you let me know by Wednesday

I will thank you for your kindness.

My kind regards to you

So goodbye

I am yours

Truly Mrs Briggs

*Mrs Briggs, Maloga, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
20 February, 1886²⁹⁶*

Dear Sir, I have the opportunity in writing you these few lines, hoping it may find you in good health, as it leaves me at present. Please Sir would you be kind enough to send me a pass for four big ones and 3 little ones. By doing so you would oblige your humble servant Mrs Briggs.

Please send it up that I may get it by Saturday to make it [?] it for the [?] the Sat following. Mrs Morgan wont hers to last up to the 6 of March also Maggie Kerr[.] Give us time to get ready and Please would your be so kind enough to see if there is a house to go in when I go Down. I let Alick Campbell and I would like to go back to my old place again. I must conclude by saying farewell[;] also I send my best respects for Carrie[?] & Polly wishes to be remebered to you[.] I am you sincerely old friend Mrs Briggs.

reply soon in return by mail

I let Alik Campbell go into my place for a while as Mr Goodall asked me to let him. Go intell he got one Built up for himself

Please I wont the pass from Echuca to Lilydale also C Morgan.

Captain Page replied that there was no house for Louisa to stay in at present at Coranderrk but there was room at Ramahyuck if she wished to go there. In the meantime Louisa's son William had requested that Louisa be allowed to live with him on his farm and receive rations from the Board. Captain Page informed Louisa that this was not possible.²⁹⁷

Bessy Cameron

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
20 August, 1879²⁹⁸*

....I beg also to mention to you that the black woman Bessy Cameron has left Ramahyuck yesterday, as she does not want to live with her husband anymore. Before she left she burnt his best clothes and abstracted his bank book, no doubt with the intention to get his money from the savings bank. She said she was going to you to ask if you would forward her to Condah. I do not know what to say, because she was quite friendly to us, yet I fear she will make some story. Besides I am afraid either she is losing part[?] of reason and common sense or is awful wicked, as she had made known she would stab her husband. Please let me know when she comes.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
24 August, 1879²⁹⁹*

Sir

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Donald Cameron's bank book and to report that Mrs. Cameron has returned, but states that she is going to live at Condah and likewise that she will take the two girls with her as well as the boy. Her husband is sending inclosed a petition to you that the girls may be left here in the boardinghouse for the season as he says that Mrs Cameron is not a good housekeeper, which is quite correct....

Mrs. Cameron did agree to neither and will go to Condah, to which proposal I can say nothing, she must please herself, but as regards the two girls I think like Cameron, they are here as well cared for as elsewhere and will not improve under Mrs. Cameron's direction, but will certainly be a conflict to the deserted husband.

*Donald Cameron, Ramahyuck, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
27 August, 1879³⁰⁰*

Dear Sir,

My wife just returned from Melbourne, & tells me that you had given her a place at Lake Condah; well perhaps I can do nothing if she goes she may, but I humbly beg you and the Board not to remove my children from Ramahyuck, I have put them in the boarding house, & they are happy & cheerful, & well cared for, if they should be taken away, it will be for misery, for my wife is very careless of house keeping I must now conclude Dear Sir

I remain yours truly

Donald Cameron

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
30 August, 1879³⁰¹*

I received your letter in reference to Mrs Cameron and thank you for the steps you took in the matter. From all I can observe I think she wishes to go to Condah which may perhaps be the best for her at present as it will be easy to come back at any time. If you send her a pass from Sale to Melbourne I think she would be glad. As for myself I told her from the first she may please herself and will not make any difficulties. I only hope she speaks the truth in regard to her story.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, to Bessy Cameron, Briagolong,
27 February, 1883³⁰²*

My dear Mrs. Cameron,

After I had spoken with you and Donald last week I got your letter in reference to your wishes to go to Lake Tyers and live with Emily Brindle. Since then you wrote to Mrs. Hagenauer in the same manner expressing your desire to live with Emily Brindle and thus separating from your husband. We have been so busy with picking hops, otherwise I should have written to you sooner, but you know how much I have to do at this time of season. In regard to your wishes to go and live at Lake Tyers with Emily, both Mrs. Hagenauer and myself are of the same mind that we cannot recommend that course, for we could never be a party of recommending that you should separate from your husband. Of course for the sake of the children you ought to go to one station, as otherwise the children would have to suffer for it. I just heard that the Brindles are coming to live at Ramahyuck for some months, to arrive sometime in April, so that your going for that reason to Lake Tyers, would be in vain, I wish to say to you at the same time, that I shall make no opposition to whatever place you all like to go, and it will be best you write to Capt. Page and arrange matters for you should have a home soon. I will be glad if you write to me again. Kindest remembrance to Donald and the children.

Yours truly F. A. Hagenauer.

*Bessy Cameron, Briagolong, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
6 March, 1883³⁰³*

Dear Sir

I send you Mr Hagenauers letter which I received on Saturday evening, so I hope you will let us all live at Lake Tyers station now. I dread the Wimmera climate, it is enough punishment to Donald that he has to live on a mission station. I pray you will have mercy on me & not send us out of the district[;] the children & I are picking hops at Mr Blundys Briagolong; it will take a fortnight more before we will finish,

then I hope we will be ready

I remain Dear Sir

Your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

*Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Briagolong,
12 March, 1883³⁰⁴*

Dear Mrs Cameron

I have received your letter of the 6th inst & should have answered it before but wished to hear further on the subject from Mr Hagenauer before replying – You ask to be allowed to go to Lake Tyers as you dread the Wimmera climate. In the summer time it certainly is not an agreeable climate but during the winter it is preferable to that of Gippsland [?] I do not imagine that there will be any necessity for you to be at Lake Hindmarsh more than a few months...It is only for your good, as you know that Mr Hagenauer & myself recommend for a time[?] the Wimmera to[?] Lake Tyers so I hope you will assist us to get Donald off as soon as possible[.] Do not pass through town without calling at the office – I will send passes as soon as you are ready.

*Bessy Cameron, Briagolong, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
14 March, 1883³⁰⁵*

Dear Sir

I received your kind letter last night & I thank you for your patience to me. It will take another week to finish the hops but I will leave off on Saturday as I have to make some clothes for the children & myself, we will be ready I hope the first week in April, but I will send you a letter when we are ready. Again I thank you for your kindness.

I remain

Dear Sir your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

*Bessy Cameron, Stratford, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
9 April, 1883³⁰⁶*

Dear Sir

I was looking out very anxiously for a letter last week, and when Donald came home on Saturday evening I knew the reason why you had not written, as Mr MacFaintosh[?] had given Donald your letter & also mine to read. Dear sir we will still go as it was first arraigned so if you will grant my request which I asked in my letter last week, & also send the passes this week, we will start on Monday next.

Dear Sir

I remain

Your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

*Bessy Cameron, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
29 August, 1883³⁰⁷*

Dear Sir

This is the last of the winter months, & I hope you will send us
the pass, according to your promise

your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

On 31 August Hagenauer wrote to Captain Page urging him to prevent
the Camerons from returning to Gippsland on account of 'repeated
immorality' and drunkenness. He believed Mr Bulmer would also
object to receiving them at Lake Tyers.

*Bessy Cameron, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
24 September, 1883³⁰⁸*

Sir

I am very sorry you did not answer my letter which I wrote last month.
Please sir let me know if you will send a pass or not. If you are willing
to send one, will you send it at the end of next month[.] You promised
that we should be here at Ebenezer for the winter months or else I
never would have come. Donald wishes to get a home of our own[;] we
dont want to be dependent on Government supplies[.] We both promise
too that we never set our feet at Ramahyuck.

Your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, memorandum to BPA,
1 October, 1883³⁰⁹*

....That the Camerons should live in the Wimmera District is no
hardship, for Cameron has only returned to his home and his relatives,
and Mrs Cameron is neither a Gippsland native. Mrs Cameron states in
her note to Captain Page that they will not take Government supply, if
they are allowed to go to Gippsland. This was not the case, when away
from here, as I supplied them with a great deal besides which they sold
about £30 worth of furnitures and other things during the short time
they were away. At Ebenezer the children can go to school, and
Cameron is at home. No promise of theirs has ever been kept and if
they return to Gippsland it would become a public scandal. Captain
Page would do well to refer the question with my former letters to the
consideration of the Board, or, if desirable I shall be quite willing to
address a memorial to the Honourable the Chief Secretary not to allow
their return here to Gippsland.

*Bessy Cameron, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
10 October, 1883³¹⁰*

Sir,

I thank you very much for your kind letter, & have thought much over it, & have come to the conclusion, that I can never be happy on a mission station. Donald has told me to ask you if you would be so kind as to let us stay here till Xmas, Mr Kramer has given him a little work to do for the 2 months coming, only we were afraid you might not be willing to send a pass then. Hoping dear Sir that you will kindly send us word again

I remain Dear Sir

your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
13 October, 1883³¹¹*

My dear Captain Page

I was very glad to hear from you, that Mrs Cameron will stay at Lake Hindmarsh [Ebenezer] and it would be better in every way if she remains there. I heard that Bessy Cameron had written to people in Gippsland to get employment for Donald but she was not successful, which may be the reason of their not coming just now. I have no doubt that she will do her best to keep away from the control of the stations, but they cannot maintain themselves alone far less their children. You should appoint the children to some station where they should go to school, for they have not well attended whilst at Stratford and had to [be] brought before the Police Court. Whilst personally I feel very sorry for them all, I can only say that they should not be allowed to walk strait way into temptation. If the Board, however, sends them here, of course, I shall make the best of the difficulty, feeling sure at the same time that it will give endless trouble. Do your best to persuade them to remain where they are.

*Bessy Cameron, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 19 December,
1883³¹²*

Dear Sir

Will you be so kind as to send our pass for home, my little girl cannot stand the climate, the few months we have been here, she has had two attacks of fits, the last one she had was a fortnight ago, & was very severe, so I hope you will send the pass the end of this week.

Hoping you are quite well, Dear Sir

I remain your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

*Bessy Cameron, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
31 December, 1883³¹³*

Dear Sir

I received your letter on the 29th inst. You wish to know how many there are of us, there are four children, Donald & myself. Please send it by Friday's mail[;] then we will get it on Saturday, & please give us time to get our luggage with us in Melbourne, as we had some trouble when we got there, had to wait a month before we got our bedding & there were no spare blankets.

Thanking you so much for your kindness to me.

I remain Dear Sir

Your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

*John Bulmer, Lake Tyers, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
11 January, 1884³¹⁴*

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of yesterday re Donald and Bessie Cameron....Mr Hagenauer has explained his objections to their living here[.] I dare say you are aware that he is official visitor to the Station so of course some notice should be taken of his objection, besides which we have worked amicably together for over 20 years and it would hardly do to sow seeds of discord which I fear this would do.

*John Bulmer, Lake Tyers, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
16 January, 1884³¹⁵*

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that Bessie Cameron and her family arrived here on Monday the 14th...conveyed from Cunninghame by Mr Laughton's buggy. She was on Tuesday delivered of a still born child. As the journey is rather rough between Cunninghame & Lake Tyers, and she being much nearer her confinement than she thought, perhaps this was the cause of her mishap, however she is doing very well.

Donald did not arrive with her as he was detained by Mr Howitt in Sale. he is to be here on Saturday.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
20 January, 1884³¹⁶*

...Mr Kramer wrote to me that Donald and children could have gladly remained at Ebenezer, but that Bessy was continually talking to get them to go to Lake Tyers. The reason no doubt, of her going there is well-known to you and it is [?] a great pity that through her the happiness and peace of another family (the Thorps) should be

destroyed. I am afraid that the trouble is now only beginning. They should never have been allowed to go back to Gippsland.

*John Bulmer, Lake Tyers, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
22 January, 1884³¹⁷*

My dear Capt Page

Please do not trouble yourself about the Camerons[;] the difficulty will soon be settled as I believe Donald has got a job with Mr Howitt and will take his wife & family with him. I think with you it is a pity to punish the wife & little ones for the husband's misdeeds. I am very glad I got Bessie over to Lake Tyers at once as there could have been some scandal had the poor woman been confined at the Entrance.

Donald came here but only remained a day or two[;] he went away yesterday to arrange with Mr Howitt as to residence for his family. he says he never intended to live on a Mission Station & for this I highly commend him.

*Bessy Cameron, Lake Tyers, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
25 January, 1884³¹⁸*

Dear Sir

We did not meet Mr Hagenauer in Sale, & we did not know what to do, so Donald went to Mrs Howitt the police magistrate's wife, & she gave us an order to go to a boarding house where we stayed till Saturday dinner time, then she gave us another order for the steamer which brought us down to the entrance that same evening. (Donald & the old man stayed in Sale at Mr Howitts)

Sunday morning the two girls & Bob walked out to Lake Tyers. Mr Bulmer got a trap for the 2 little ones & myself for Monday[.] I got out at dinner that day[;] the following day Tuesday I was laid up & my baby was born dead[.] I have just got up today. Donald was down this day week, & he told me that he has work from Mr Howitt, who has a hop garden in Bairnsdale. Donald will get 30/ shillings a week & a house rent free, I am very thankful for that.

I believe Mr Hagenauer was in Stratford waiting to give us a welcome to Ramahyuck, but both Donald & I never hope to go there again[.] When we wished to come back to Gippsland, it was not to go back to Ramahyuck.

Please Sir I want to ask you if you could let us have 2 iron bedsteads & a sofa & 4 chairs, also a camp oven & boiler, would you please let Mr Howitt get it for us, we need them so much, we are going to stay here until the hop picking commences.

Robert Harrison likes this place very much, he goes out to work every day.

Hopeing you are quite well
I remain

Dear Sir
Your obedient Servant
Bessy Cameron

*Bessy Cameron, Lake Tyers, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
15 May, 1884³¹⁹*

Dear Sir

I hope you will be so kind as to listen to my petition & allow us to live on the station. I have tried living on our own earnings & it wont do. Donald has not been earning regular wages, & it takes all he earns to pay for our food, he said when he had paid what we owed he would go to Ramahyuck, but I wont go there, perhaps you might say why did we not stay at Ebenezer, but dear sir, I would rather have seen my little child in her coffin than in another fit, & if you were a father you would feel the same, I hope you will allow us to stay on this station, it comes hard on the children & myself wandering about without a home, & I feel it the more as I had a good home when I was young & then to be tossed about in old age. Please listen to my prayer for it is a prayer for a home,

Hopeing you are quite well

Dear Sir, I remain

Your obedient servant

Bessy Cameron

*John Bulmer, Lake Tyers, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
17 May, 1884³²⁰*

Sir

Mrs Cameron & her children have just come to the station[;] she says that her husband Donald Cameron cannot support her as his earnings are not very much. Before she came I wrote to her telling her that she would not be allowed to live here while her husband was in Bairnsdale, however she has come and now I think it best to inform the Board of the circumstance. She tells me that she wishes to live here until Donald can save enough to purchase a bag of flour as they cannot make his earnings meet their wants while they have to purchase bread ready made, but I fear Donald has acquired habits of extravagance which may make the purchase a remote matter.

*Bessy Cameron, Eastwood, Bairnsdale, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
1 July, 1884³²¹*

Dear Sir

Having heard that the board is going to allow rations to be given to those people who are away from the stations, I am writing these few lines hoping we may be allowed rations too, if it is to be given to us

can we get it at Mr Bulmer's as the steamers are running up & down the lakes 3 times a week[.]

I remain Dear Sir

Your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

Bessy Cameron, Eastwood, Bairnsdale, to Captain Page, 4 August, 1884³²²

Dear Sir

I received your letter & would have written before only my hands were sore, I am very sorry to see that we cannot get any rations, it would have been such a help to us, as we are such a large family, you ask how we are getting on, well pretty well considering, I go out for a days work & get 5/ a day but it is slack time as there are no visitors now, but it will be better in the summer I hope. I saw Mr Hagenauer at Lake Tyers.

Dear Sir, if, I only say if we asked for a pass to Dimboola could we get it[;] please let me know, I dont care to go but Donald was talking of it. Please Sir, Mr Bulmer lent me 10/ [;]could you pay him please.

Mrs Brindle is coming to live in Bairnsdale. There will be work for Jimmy now in the hop garden[;] her little girl can go to school with my girls, my children have not been to school as they have had the hitch dreadful[;] we are just getting rid of it. If it is not asking too much please sir will you send me a few lines

I remain Sir

Your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

Bessy Cameron, Eastwood, Bairnsdale, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 14 October, 1884³²³

Dear Sir

Donald & I have been talking matters over, & find it so difficult to make ends meet, he was laid up with a bad hand all last week & I have been day after day seeking for work & can find nothing to do, & now we have made up our minds to live on a mission station & find Lake Tyers the best, if you will kindly give your consent[.] You could give the contract to put up a cottage for us to live in to Donald, Donald wants to go out to work on some station. I am of some use to Mrs Bulmer & else where I am not.

Accept my gratefulness for past favours. We would like to go after the training of the hops are over

Hopeing to hear a favourable answer

I remain Dear Sir

Your obedient Servant

Bessy Cameron

Robert Harrison the young man who came with us from Ebenezer was married at Lake Tyers by Mr Hagenauer last month

*John Bulmer, Lake Tyers, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
22 October, 1884³²⁴*

Sir

Before anything is decided about the Camerons it would be well to write to Donald himself as unless I very much mistake his wife's idea is to come to Lake Tyers and leave him to work outside. This of course would never do. Personally, I have no objections to their living here. Though possibly Mr Hagenauer would rather they lived at Ramahyuck.

In case it is decided that they come here, accommodation would have to be provided for them as all the houses are occupied.

There is an ill feeling that I am aware of between the Camerons & Thorpes.

In 1889 Bessy was still living in Bairnsdale. At the monthly meeting of the BPA on 3 April, a letter from Bessy was read complaining that she had not been fairly treated by Mr Hagenauer (now the Secretary of the BPA) when she came to town to bring her daughter to the hospital, and also that she had received no help from the Board. Hagenauer stated that the Cameron family were earning £4 a week. The Board held that under such circumstances they were not entitled to Government assistance.³²⁵

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Bairnsdale,
8 August, 1893³²⁶*

My dear Mrs. Cameron,

I was glad to observe from the papers that the steamer [?] had safely passed Thursday Island – all well – so that Haynes may be all right.

The object of my writing is by direction of the Board on the following subjects.

I. Mr Dreversmann of Bairnsdale has sent an account for rent due to him, which the Board cannot recognise, but states, that you must pay it yourselves or live at one of the stations.

II. J. Brodribb Esqr. Secretary of Education has written to me in regard to 10/- which you borrowed from him with the promise that you would send weapons for the amount. The weapons should be sent at once, as otherwise you will certainly come into difficulties.

I shall ask Donald to see if he care[?] to get the weapons for you, but I am afraid that he will not be willing to do so.

III. Dr. Duncan of Bairnsdale has also written and forwarded an account for £3.3.0 for attending to your daughter during confinement. The Board could not pay that account and you will have to look to the white father of the child to pay it at once. I feel exceedingly sorry that you

have [?] yourself into such difficulties and I am afraid that if these complaints [?] up next time before the Board matters will be more serious than you expect.

You know how much interest I take at all times in you and would like to see you as an old friend happy but when matters come so much wrong it is really time, that you should consider your own and your childrens happiness, which you really have not done hitherto. I hope to hear from you or see you soon.

With kindest regards

Yours F. A. Hagenauer

Margaret Blair

*Margaret Blair, Framlingham, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
5 December, 1884³²⁷*

Dear Sir,

Would you be so kind as to send me a pass to go up to Coranderrk Station. I would like to go up before Christmas[.] I shall be ready to start a week before Christmas[;] you promised me a pass when you was here last time[;] you said that if I wrote to you I would get it[.] I remain

Dear Sir your Humble Servant

Margret Blair

Emma Campbell

*Mrs Campbell, Cobrum Station, NSW, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
8 November, 1885³²⁸*

Dear Sir

I am write you these few lines[.] I want you to send me a pass for next week if you Please[;] a pass for Echuca [?] it will be nearer for me to go to Echuca[.] Please send the pass up for next week[.] I have no more to say at present

I am your
truly
servant

Mrs Campbell

Emily Brindle

*Emily Taylor, Lake Condah, to Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
11 December, 1893³²⁹*

Dear Sir

I am now writing you a few lines asking you could you kindly let me have a pass for the 4 children Alex & self as I've been very ill & the Dr has advised me to go for a change, so I would very much like to go back to Bairnsdale. Alex has only been away 2 weeks shearing &

had to come home on account of me being ill & has been home ever since. Now he is working for a while at the drain. Hoping this short note will find you quite well. Kindly oblige me by Thursday 14th as I would like to be in Gippsland before Xmas

I remain

Yours respectfully

Emily Taylor

Agnes McCreddie

*Agnes McCreddie, Ramahyuck, to the Premier of Victoria,
10 November, 1896³³⁰*

Dear Sir

Would you be so kind, as to help me and my family back to the Western district[;] we want to leave Gipps-Land and go back to the Richerson. I went to Mr. Hagenauer with a letter that he had given to me to see where a gentleman had written to him for a wool roller to send him Donald McCreddie thats my husband but he wasnt able to go so he said that his son was to go in his place but the boy knows nothing about wool rolling[.] I told Mr Hagenauer so he said I am not going to have him on the station any longer he will have to go all the same but I said what for[,] he has not done anything wrong[;] but he said he as been seen in the wash-house talking with one of the girls in the dark[.] I said there was no truth in it[;] they wasnt in the wash house and I also wanted to tell him that it was not in the dark[;] this was in the morning[;] there was two others with them and some of the children playing around but he would not listen[;] he said he would not give him any more emplyment nor rations[.] I told him I would give him my share but he dont leave the place till we all go[;] he said clear away of the station and it will be a blessing when you are gone you are a dirty low woman and with that he slamed the gate in my face and went of[.] I would rather live in a camp rather than live here any longer[.] I hope you will help us of the station as soon as possible and I wont give the board any further trouble, you will oblige

your humble

servant Agnes McCreddie

Agnes' letter was forwarded to the BPA. Two members of the Board visited Ramahyuck to find that Agnes and her family had left the station and gone to Sale. The Board informed Agnes that it would not assist her moving to the Western District, but that she could go to Lake Tyers at any time.

Alice Login

*Alice Login, Bairnsdale Hospital, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary,
25 February, 1910³³¹*

Dear Sir

I am writing a few lines hoping to get a favourable reply. I am in the hospital[.] I have been in here 5 months[;] the reason why I am writing is to ask you if you kindly grant me permission to have my sister Annie Harrison to look after me and my little children[;] she at Lake Condah. Since Ive been in the hospital Iv lost the use of both my legs since Ive been in here and I dont think that Ill ever get the use of them back again and now Dear Sir they dont seem to do anything for me[.] I am so tired of being here where the doctor dont try to do anything only just give you medicine whats doing you more harm than good. I ought to have be able to walk after being here 5 months[.] I think the Board is just throwing money away for nothing[;] he is a doctor what gives more attention to the rich than to the poor[.] So I want you to help my Husband to remove me home again[.] Ive ask Captain Howe to send my husband up to take me home and he wrote and told me the Board said I would have to stay in the hospital till the doctor cant do anything more for me[.] I think thats not fair[;] would you kindly enquire if the Board said it and please let me know[.] I think as I am laying here in the hospital in bed I might as well be at home in bed[.] I could do many little things for my children and husband by sewing and mending and making my children clothes as to be idle. I feel it very much when I cant be at home as my husband hasnt the means to take me home[;] would you kindly help him to remove me home[;] I am asking you because I know that you take a deep interest in the natives and I know you would help me. I was paralysed 6 years ago and was in the Sale Hospital[;] they couldnt do anything for me[.] I stop there 3 weeks and I found they werent doing me any good so I went home to Ramahyuck[.] I couldnt walk but my husband & a lady friend of Mr Hagenauer used to rub my legs and I got the use of them back again[;] thats the reason I want to go home because I could get them rubed[;] please let me have my sister to move me and I wont ask for anything more[.] Please oblige yours

Please dont refuse a cripple

Alice Login

The matter was referred to Captain Howe, manager at Lake Tyers, who commented that Alice was 'a very discontented person' and was receiving every possible attention in the hospital. Alice eventually returned to Lake Tyers in April 1910.

In March 1914 Captain Howe wrote to the Secretary complaining that Alice was constantly quarrelling with other women on the station. He asked that for the sake of the other people the Logins be removed to Coranderrk for a time. The Board concurred. In June 1916 Mr Roberts,

manager of Coranderrk, complained that when Mrs Robarts asked another person in the Logins' cottage to leave, Alice and her daughter called Mrs Robarts the 'devil'. He asked that the Logins be moved to another station. As a result of further complaints, Alice Login and her three daughters were sent back to Lake Tyers in August 1917.

*Alice Login, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ferguson, manager, Lake Tyers,
29 October, 1918³³²*

Dear Sir

I have a complaint to lay before you which I wish you to look into for me[;] it is concerning Mrs McRae[;] it is the second time she has picked a quarrel with me and as I have no protection in a husband I am appealing to you for assistance[;] could something be done that I may have peace & quietness if this is to be my permanent home[.] I am not in the best of health and cannot stand to be worried like this

Hoping you will favour my request

I remain

your humble servant

Alice Login

*Alice Login, Lake Tyers, to Dr Argyle, Chief Secretary, BPA,
6 January, 1925³³³*

Dear Sir

I the undersign wish to notify you that my two daughters & son-in-law³³⁴ have no home here on Lake Tyers Station & that I wish to leave Lake Tyers with my two little grandchildren & live with my daughter & son-in-law who are willing to support my food & clothing also for the two children as Ive no one here on the station[;] please would you grant me permission at once[;] kindly oblige

yours truly

Mrs Alice Logan

Please grant Samuel Rankin permission to come as I was looking after him

Emily Stephen

In 1910 Friedrich Hagenauer died and Emily, then living at Lake Tyers, obtained permission to go to visit Ramahyuck for two weeks to see Mrs Hagenauer.

Emily Stephen, Ramahyuck, to Mr Watts MP, 16 March, 1910³³⁵

Dear Sir

Will you kindly excuse me for troubling you, the reason why I write is, I had a letter from my daughter at Lake Tyers telling me that I would be summoned if I did not come home & let Gilbert go to school. Sir we are not able to go home[;] we have no means to get away & will have to wait here for maize picking; I wrote to the Constable at Stratford asking him if he would write to the Board to let us have some

rations given to us in the mean time while we wait for the maize. I will explain to you why we are in such a fix. We came here to see Mrs Hagenauer & say goodbye to her, before she left here; & while here I helped to do some work. I worked for one week & for my help she gave me her sewing machine, a foot bath, two picture frames & several other things, so you see Sir I cannot manage to get these things away without money[;] to take us from here to Sale & from there to Cunninghame & from there to Lake Tyers it will cost us over 30/- or about that[.] We went Hop-picking to Briagolong & it was a failure as the red spider pest had got in & spoilt nearly the whole paddock, we only picked five patches & left more than half the paddock standing, we only picked nine days, made nothing only enough for our food. We would have had three weeks good picking only for the pest spoiling the hops[;] it was a great loss to the owner. So you see dear Sir that is the only thing we can do is to wait for the maize[.] My son Bertie[,] his wife & child, Gilbert & I came here[.] Sir would you kindly help us that we could get our rations here till the maize picking starts. I would write & tell you when the picking starts, we only want our rations till then, because we will be able to make enough to carry us comfortably away from here back to Lake Tyers. I wrote to Captain Howe three times telling him that I was staying to see the last of Mrs Hagenauer & that I was helping at the house & then when we went hop-picking & when we came back so as to let him know that we were not able to come at present. If we could get home quickly for Gilbert to go to school we would. Would you kindly answer my letter please Mr Watts[;] also would you kindly use your influence on our behalf[;] trusting to hear favourably from you

I am yours respectfully
Emily Milton Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Ramahyuck, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
29 March, 1910³³⁶*

Dear Sir

I am just writing to you to thank you for your kind consideration of our request, kindly thank the members of our Board also for me. When the maize-picking begins I will write & let you know. We are living in the old mission house, & while here we made ourselves comfortable: the windows in the kitchen were all smashed & we took two good window sashes from the village & put them in the kitchen, so as to keep the wind out: we did not know that the cottage was applied for from which we took our window sash. The other window sash was from the top house in the village & they were really the only good ones in the village as nearly every window is broken to bits. Poor old home, it looks simply awful everything broken. We only heard the next day after we had taken the windows, that the cottages had been applied for so I thought it best to let you know if any remarks were passed about

our taking the windows. When we leave here we can put the windows back[.] Once again thanking you & the Board

I remain yours respectfully
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Ramahyuck, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
11 April, 1910³³⁷*

Dear Sir

Please do kindly excuse me for troubling you; why I write is I wish you to kindly place a request for me before the Members of the Abg. Board[;] If they would allow me to have two forms from the Church. The side ones with no backs; to make a dresser or cupboard in my kitchen at L. Tyers[.] I've asked at different times for boards, but could not get any as the supply was only enough for whatever Captain Howe wanted them for. I am not complaining because if the Captain could have spared them he would have let me have them. So I thought if the Members did not mind, it would be a good chance to get some of these boards before they all go & which would be most acceptable to me[;] also please could I take my old table from here. We are making use of it while here[.] When we removed from here & our things were sent after us instead of my table being sent down Moffat's old dirty table being sent to me & I would not have it. There are here two good safes which I am using. I took them out of the empty houses scrubbed them well out[.] It is a pity to let them go to ruin when they could be made of use[.] If they do not mind I would take them home[;] we would soon find them handy. Please kindly ask the members to consider my request & grant it if they think it advisable. Trusting a favourable reply. Also kindly let me know if you received my letter dated 29th last month

with respects
E. M. Stephen

Later that month on 27 April, 1910, the manager of Lake Tyers, Captain Howe, complained to the Board that Emily was intending to take her daughter Blanche maize picking. Howe had told Emily that her leave from the station was now cancelled as she had returned and that if she left and took Blanche he would have her brought back by the police. He was also unhappy that her son Gilbert, aged eleven, had been living with her at Ramahyuck when he ought to be at school. Emily defied Captain Howe and took Blanche maize picking. By November 1910 Emily was living at Lake Tyers again and Blanche was working as a servant for the Howes.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Tyers, to Mr Callaway, Vice President, BPA,
28 February, 1911³³⁸*

Dear Sir

You will have heard by now from Captain Howe that they do not want Blanche any more & that he wishes the Board to make arrangements for getting her a place. He told me that today. It was like this: Last night Mrs Howe wanted Blanche to remain after the other two girls had gone to put the babies to bed, that was after seven o'clock & the girl was afraid to come down by herself as it was dark. Blanche left a while after the girls; This morning when she went up Mrs Howe said I am cross with you & I do not think Captain will allow you in the place[;] he will kick you out. Blanche said to her I'll make the fire & put the babies water on & go home & not wait to be kicked out. So then Sir after my breakfast I went up to see the Captain & he told me that he had already written to the Board, as Blanche was not reliable any more & careless with the babies & their bottles[,] that Blanche did nothing right & Mrs Howe had to do everything herself for the babies. The other girl that is working there told me some time ago that Blanche was like a mother to those babies[;] not that white woman[.] Blanche does everything for them[;] that is how she expressed herself to me, & tonight I asked her what does Blanche do up there, & I told her what the Captain said to me & she said oh that is not true Blanche does more than any other girl would do for those babies. (I myself was nurse-girl for Mrs Hagenauer & I never did for her children what Blanche had to do for Mrs Howe's babies, nor any of the girls that were nurse girls before me)[.] So again Sir if this little disturbance had not happened I would have been surprised to hear that Blanche was to be sent away: he never gave me notice at all that Blanche was not giving satisfaction[.] I think he should have given me notice & I could have spoken to her to do her work properly & not give trouble & if she did not do any better then I could have written to some of my friends to help me to get a place for her. I said to him why did you not let me know; he said you have time to write & find a place for her. I call that not nice of him. Mr Callaway please I am going to make a request. I would have asked later on; but this affair about Blanche requires me to ask now. It is this Sir. If the Board would kindly allow my family & myself to go maize-picking to Tuiamba[?] where we were last year. The reason why I wish to go is, I am getting a boat from Mr Arthur Dalsher at the end of the season, & I am only able to pay for it by going out maize-picking, also Sir if Blanche could remain at home with me & go with us, And again Sir when the new act came out Captain himself had written to the Board saying he thought Blanche too young to leave the protection of her mother & now he is the first to propose her going out. As to going about the Station I would not allow her, in fact she is not a girl to go about the houses, at the time Mrs O'Rourke told you the same about her, we keep mostly to ourselves[.] Would the Board allow her to stay

another year on the Station. She could go up to work for Mrs Bulmer & sweep the Church out for her rations. A young girl like her may get into bad company, one does not know whom they mix up with when out in service in the City. Dear Sir would you kindly use your influence on our behalf. I leave it all to you, also would you kindly write to me & let me know the decision of the Board as well as when they send their directions to the Manager. If they wont let her remain another year kindly let her remain till the maize picking & I will look about & try & make arrangements. I know full well that you will do what is best for us, as you said we had a good friend in Mr. Murray as well as yourself

My respects to Mrs Calloway & yourself

I am yours respectfully
Emily Milton Stephen

The Board replied to Emily that it would not be wise to allow Blanche to go maize picking but that she could remain at the station until further notice.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Tyers, to Mr Callaway, Vice President, BPA,
30 March, 1911³³⁹*

Dear Sir

I should have answered your letter sooner, only Sir I was not too well & worried, & could not sit down & collect my thoughts to what I had to write. Kindly thank the members for the considerate reply to my request concerning Blanche, & also I thank you very much for your influence which I am sure you used on our behalf. You having been here & hearing & seeing how matters stood of course could more clearly explain to the members my request. Sir, is it not with the approval of the Board that Blanche works for Mrs Bulmer & the lady is perfectly satisfied with her. And now Sir Mrs Howe said to Blanche today, I suppose you know that you have to come back to me 1st of April Saturday (& she would be a big fool if she left Mrs Bulmer for Mrs Howe) & that Ada Johnson goes to Mrs Bulmer; the manner in which she spoke to the girl, was, What I say is law & has to be done & no two ways about it[.] She told Mrs Bulmer that Ada does not know how to make the babies food & does not understand how to manage them. Do you think it is right wanting to take the girl away from Mrs Bulmer & also after saying she was unreliable, neglectful & careless[;] those were the Captain's own words to me. I thought Mrs Howe's position here was to teach the girls in her house to work & how to do things rightly or properly (but perhaps too much trouble)[;] why doesn't she show Ada how to do the babies food & other things as she showed Blanche. Mr Callaway please, if they write in & say that they want Blanche back tell them that it is with the Board's approval that she is with Mrs Bulmer, & also that they did not want her any more. Mrs Howe is too high & mighty & not fit for the position of matron of an

Institution like this[;] makes fowl out of one & fish out of the other[;] she considers us slaves that we have to bow to her decision[.] And another thing when I spoke to Captain Howe when he told me that he had written to the Board about Blanche I asked him: Captain, if Blanche once leaves your house could she go back again & he said no, once she leaves there she has gone for good, please remind him if they say that their babies cannot do without Blanche, the children must get used to other girls like any other children because they will not always have Blanche.

Mrs Bulmer insists on Blanche attending prayers & religious instructions every day: in the afternoon Blanche comes home after she has finished her work & we have been going fishing[;] at present the fish are plentiful. Sir this letter is to yourself not to the Board. If it is necessary to place this before them then please yourself[;] it is for you to decide.

Rev Canon Gason was here, he also asked me a few questions regarding the station & I answered him as correctly as I could[.] I could not do otherwise, he said Mrs Bond had told him several things concerning the people what she had heard. I told him (that personally I did not care for her) what she said was quite correct. He told Mr Bulmer that he should give Confirmation Lessons to the young people, & again Mr Gason's opinion of the people was the same as your own[;] that no one seems to interest themselves in the people here[.] This letter was to thank you for your kind reply & also to give you an idea of what is before us if Mrs Howe tries to use her authority in taking Blanche from Mrs Bulmer; as I said Sir this letter is private to you but if needs be then make use of what is in it. Kindly reply if you are not too busy owing to your many duties. I can wait your pleasure. I only wish to know what do you think of it personally[.] Please would you kindly let me know where to address the baskets I told you I would make for Mrs Calloway[.] My respects to Mrs Calloway & yourself

I am yours respectfully
Emily Milton Stephen

Friday 31rst

PS Mrs & Captain Howe asked Blanche if she would come back & Captain told her to please herself & she told Mrs Howe no she would not like to go back

*R. Howe, manager, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
3 April, 1911³⁴⁰*

Sir

I have the honor to report that the conduct of Emily Stephen is detrimental to the good order & discipline of this station: she practically defies me but in such a manner that I can only make a general complaint, and she goes round to all the blacks and the Bulmers telling

them that she has the "Board" on her side and is not going to be [?] by me.

I would therefore recommend that she be removed from this station, and if she could be placed at some Depot where she could receive rations etc it would be more suitable than sending her to any other station where she would be certain to cause trouble.

The Board replied that such action would be unjustified in the absence of a specific charge or complaint.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Tyers, to Mr Callaway, Vice President, BPA,
18 May, 1911³⁴¹*

Dear Sir

Thank you kindly for answering my letter[.] I would have answered sooner only I was ill[.] I was four days in bed[.] I also at the same time received a letter from Mrs Bond, it was very kind of her to write: I am answering her now. By the tone of letter I see she does interest herself on our behalf & wishes the people to be happy & comfortable, she said it is the wish of the Members of the Board that we all should be well cared for both in the time of sickness & health. Sir you need not fear that I would take advantage of your kindness to me & make myself objectionable to either Captain or Mrs Howe & try to defy them. I asked Captain if my stove could be built in & Billy Hayes did it last week. Sir, would you allow Captain Howe to give Dave Mullett some rations while he puts up my fence. I will explain. My fence is all broken down & Captain told me some time ago that he would give wire netting for a good fence to be put up, at the time he said he would get Billy Hayes to do it but he was not able, & my husband is not to be depended upon because if I had to wait for him I may as well wait till Doom's Day. I wish to get some seed in & we cannot dig till the fence is fixed up & while David is doing nothing at present I thought it was a good chance to get it up, in a week or so David is going to work with a Mr Kennyday & while he is waiting he will do my fence[;] so Dear Sir will you kindly let Captain give him his wife & two little children a week's ration because it will take 4 or 5 days as he will have to split some fresh posts. Consider it favourably please. Harry, & the rest of the family are Bruthen maize-picking & I hope they will try to make money. I am getting a boat from Mr Dalshen[;] the cost is £5-0-0- & I hope I will be able to get it. At present we are all pretty well. Once again I thank you very much:

My respects to Mrs Callaway & yourself. You never said where I should address the baskets to[.] I am going to make one or two for Mrs Callaway which I hope she will like.

respectfully
E. M. Stephen

In June 1911 Captain Howe reported to the Board that he was having trouble with Emily Stephen. She had again refused his request to send her daughter Blanche, presently at Mrs Bulmer's house, back to the Howe household. Again he asked for Emily to be removed from the station. The Board informed him that Emily would have to submit to his authority otherwise the Board would consider taking steps against her.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Tyers, to Mr Callaway, Vice President, BPA,
June, 1911³⁴²*

Dear Sir

I thought when I received your last letter that all was right & that Blanche was placed with Mrs Bulmer, with your full approval & that there would be no more bother, but yesterday Captain said to me; send Blanche up to me tomorrow morning she has to work there Mrs Bulmer does not want her[.] I said Captain it is with the Board's approval that she is there & again I thought you told me that once she left your place she was not to go back. he said the Board has nothing to do with it he could please himself what he did as he is manager[.] I said I do not think you can take her away as you please; he said he can tell a man to go & work & tell him to knock off as it suited him & put him on again[.] And again Sir I think it awfully mean & selfish to take Blanche from Mrs Bulmer[;] she is an old lady & was very glad of Blanche's help because she could depend on the girl to come regular to her work[.] Mrs Bulmer is paying for her 5/- the month[.] I went to Mrs Bulmer & asked her if she did not want Blanche any more as Captain had told me: the old lady told me that Captain asked her to let them have Blanche for a while if Mrs Bulmer could so without her & she said she was glad of Blanche's help & if Blanche wished to go back she would not stop her. Blanche is perfectly satisfied where she is & does not wish to go back to Mrs Howe at all. Mr Calloway can Captain Howe compel her to go back. He says if she does not go back he will get her sent off the Station for good. Sir I would rather leave here than have the Captain always saying that I try to have my own way[;] that is what he said to me & I told him that there are people here who have their own way & do just as they please. No one here can truthfully say that I do anything to provoke either him or his wife[.] I really hardly ever see them. When I am sick I could die down in this corner for all the help or nourishment that I get from them[.] I sent once for some bread & got two hard crusts & I never sent again[.] I would not have said anything till Mrs Bon came as she told me in her letter that she intends to pay a visit here & I would tell her everything truthfully as I did to you[.] I would not say anything that I could not account for. I told him that I was going to write to you & he said you can, but I'll get her removed & if she does not come up to my house she'll get no rations. The old lady seemed afraid for me to write to you, because she said Captain's word would be taken first[.] I say again it is selfish & mean of him to want

Blanche from Mrs Bulmer when they have two girls in their house: is it not Mrs Howe's duty to train the girls here. Sir you must bear with me as I took you at your word when you said any complaint or request we had to make: to write straight to you & that is what I am doing. Tell Mr Watts & see what he thinks as I hear he is the acting Premier & so he must therefore be President of the Board[.] I only wish I could see you & I could state things more clearly & I could understand rightly. Today was the first time for nearly two years that we heard the Pathaphone playing[;] the Captain played in the School House. We had a very pleasant time today[.] Mr Bills kindly brought his Graphaphone to entertain us & then Captain brought down his instrument. Thank you kindly for the help that the Members gave towards the feast. The neighbours all round came & I think everybody enjoyed themselves[;] the children sung nicely & some recited poetry. At 11 o'clock Mr Bulmer had Service. You would have seen some animation in the people today & would not have thought them more dead than alive[.] Thanks very much to Miss Kelly's energy trouble[;] all honours is due to her & the School Committee in trying their best for the enjoyment of the whole Station. I thought you would be pleased to hear that all here were Loyal to their King. Sir again referring the the first part of my letter I forgot to state that Mrs Howe has two girls in her house working for her Ada Johnson & Sissie MacLeod[;] Ada kicthen-maid & Sissie nurse girl. A lady remarked that it was very unkind of the Captain to wish to take Blanche from Mrs Bulmer as the lady is getting old & needs help. Please would you kindly reply to me when you have time. With kind respects.

respectfully
E. M. Stephen

A petition dated 25 June 1911 was sent to the Board signed by twenty-two of the Lake Tyers Aborigines, asking that Emily and her daughter Fanny be removed to another station.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Tyers, to Mr Callaway, Vice President, BPA,
26 June, 1911*³⁴³

Dear Sir

I heard indirectly yesterday that a petition was being sent in to remove my daughter Fanny & her husband as Fanny is causing endless trouble & they wish to get her removed from here. Sir if you think that we should be removed, first would you send someone to make inquiries into the matter. I only wish you could come yourself because it would be more satisfactory. Do not send Mr Ditchburn: it should be one of the members who would sift & look thoroughly into things[;] that is if you could not come yourself down. As there are some of the people who have signed their names to this petition & they do not know what they signed: Oh Mr Calloway do try & come yourself. Oh I wish you could come. The Station is in a sort of ferment. If you are not

yourself able to come & who ever is able to come, to bring that letter or petition & ask them if they knew what they signed for. I asked one boy did he know what he was signing or if the petition was read out & explained to him & he said no: then I said well you have signed Fanny's & my home away from us, he looked astonished. I said do you wish to take our home from us[?] & he said no I did not know[.] So you can understand the feelings & attitude of the people towards us who are from Ramahyuck. Mr Callaway Fanny's doing nothing that should cause her the loss of her home. When you were here you saw the cripple woman Alice Login, we always visit her & sit awhile with her which no Lake Tyers woman do, none of them visit her or try to cheer her up. They are too selfish[;] never think of trying to do any good towards one or the other. They are all for ordering what a person should do & what they should not do. Sir I am only one person against most of the Station & that is why I think its only fair that some one should personally come & see into things, I only wish it was you who could come. I am supposed not to know anything about this affair, it is to be sprung upon us as a great surprise as one woman expressed that our cheeks would be hollowed in with surprise & my eyes as saucers[;] I suppose she was pleased with herself when she said that[;] mind you Sir I would be very sorry to leave my comfortable home & Fanny's house is comfortable also but if the Board think it desirable well they will act as they think right & just. I willingly leave it to your decision. After the members have met would you kindly reply. I will be so anxious till then

I am yours respectfully
& in trouble

E. M. Stephen

Captain Howe reported to the Board the next day that Emily still refused to submit to his orders for Blanche to return to the Howe household. The Board told him to stop Emily's rations until she submitted. He did so and Emily finally complied with his order. However, Howe still wanted her moved away from the station as he believed she was causing a lot of disturbance among the people at Lake Tyers.

*Captain Howe, Lake Tyers, to Mr Callaway, Vice President, BPA,
9 August, 1911³⁴⁴*

Dear Mr Callaway

In reply to yours re Emily Stephen: she has said openly to everyone, that she will find ways & means of removing me from here, & that she will fight to the end, which she is doing; & she boasts about writing several letters to the Board about myself & wife which of course is very detrimental to the good order of discipline of the Station & she has told so many malicious lies about us that if she were a white woman instead of an evil minded black gin I should

prosecute her communally. If Mrs Howe or myself give her any instructions about anything she at once becomes insolent & threatening us with the Board....Emily keeps the whole station in a state of ferment & while she remains here there will be no peace. She is clever in a criminal way & has a most insidious & plausible manner when she is making false statements which generally impresses & imposes upon anyone who does not know her thoroughly that is what education has done for her. I have frequently cautioned her & have informed her that if she did not behave herself I should report her to the Board & try & get her removed but she still defies me & states that she has the Board on her side & will force the Board to hold an inquiry before they dare to move her she imagines she can talk them over. She states that if possible she will choose her own members for a Board of enquiry & that Mr Ditchburn must take no part in it. Her objection to Mr Ditchburn of course is that he knows more about her than anyone else connected with the Board.

Howe continued to make complaints about Emily, and finally, in October 1911, the BPA obtained an Order-in-Council to remove Emily from Lake Tyers to Lake Condah for three months. The Board decided that if her conduct was good during this period she could return to Lake Tyers.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
7 December, 1911³⁴⁵*

Dear Sir

Will you allow me to have my children...with me for Christmas[.] I have never been parted from them before & feel that if I ask you & if you will be so good as to place the matter before Mr Calloway. That I might have my two youngest children (Gilbert & Blanche) with me that would be a happy time

Trusting that you will grant the above request

I am Dear Sir

yours obediently

Emily M. Stephen

Emily's request was refused, despite the recommendation of the missionary at Lake Condah, Rev. Stähle, that it be granted.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
3 February, 1912³⁴⁶*

Dear Sir

Would you kindly place before the members of our Board my request. My 3 months stay here has expired, & would they kindly consider to grant me permission to return to my children & home at L. Tyers, as I would be pleased to be back to them. Mr & Mrs Stahle can testify to my conduct & behaviour while here.

Trusting to a favourable reply

I am yours respectfully
Emily M. Stephen

Rev. Stähle recommended that Emily's request be granted as she had behaved well for her three month stay at Lake Condah. The Board decided however that Emily should remain at Lake Condah for a further three months and then, depending on her conduct, might return to Lake Tyers. The Board's reason was that Emily had mentioned her 'old grievances' when two Board members visited Lake Condah. The Board did not think Emily was in the right 'frame of mind' to return to Lake Tyers.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Condah, to Mr Callaway, Vice Chairman, BPA,
17 April, 1912³⁴⁷*

Dear Sir

By today's mail I received the news of the death of my grandson, also that diptheria is raging at Lake Tyers. This has made me feel very worried about my little boy & girl[.] I would like to be with them for fear of them getting sick too. Please would you grant me permission to go to them. Would you kindly wire reply. That I may be with them without delay. If you should permit.

with kind respects
E. M. Stephen

Again Rev. Stähle supported Emily's request, stating that she was well behaved. The Board inquired as to whether Emily's children had diptheria, and on finding that they did not, saw no need for Emily to return. In June 1912 the Board considered it best that Emily remain at Lake Condah and that her two youngest children be sent to live with her there. In November 1912 Emily asked the new manager of Lake Condah, Sydney Crawford, to ask the Board whether she could return to Lake Tyers so that she could be with her other children as well – Fanny Bull and her family, and Bertie Stephen and his family. The Board refused.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
8 April, 1913³⁴⁸*

Dear Sir

Would you kindly request the members of our Board to grant me 3 chairs as I have Ted O'Rourke, Willie King & his son boarding with us & I have no seats to accommodate them with, which is needed very much. You would oblige me

yours respectfully
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 21 March, 1914*³⁴⁹

Dear Sir

I have asked the manager if he would write & ask the Board if I may leave the Station. The reason being is my daughter Blanche will be married shortly & I wish to be with her when her husband is away. My son Alfred may have a home with us[;] he is quite willing to work for my support & between the two boys Alfred & Gilbert we trust that we may get. Trusting that the Board will allow us to go, my daughter Blanche & my son Gilbert & myself, we are going to live in Heywood.

respectfully
Emily M. Stephen

Emily was informed that she could leave the station as long as she lived independently of the Board.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Condah, to Captain Crawford, manager, Lake Condah, 10 September, 1914*³⁵⁰

Dear Sir

Would you kindly inform the Members of B. P. Abgs that we will be capable of supporting ourselves independent of Government aid.

My son Alfred is in permanent work earning 35/- weekly, & Gilbert will earn the same when he gets to work with his brother[;] my daughter will also get employment in the town, so I think we will be able to get on[.] And please Sir will you kindly thank the Members on behalf of my children Blanche & Gilbert & myself for their exceeding kindness to us in the past[.] Trusting that you will get a reply

with respects

I am yours respectfully
Emily M. Stephen

The Board was satisfied that Emily would be able to live on her own resources and revoked the Order-in-Council of 1911 prescribing Lake Condah as her place of residence.

*Emily Stephen, Lake Condah, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary, September, 1914*³⁵¹

Dear Sir

Please to kindly excuse me for troubling you[.] I wish to let you know that we are leaving for good. We intended to leave before Easter but it was not convenient, but now we are able to go. Dear Sir would you kindly grant me permission to have my furniture which would be such a great help & a start for us in our new home which will be most acceptable. Please...kindly consider my request & give me a favourable answer. I am also sending in my application through Capt. Crawford to

leave but I thought I would personally ask you about the furniture. We have a cottage & the owner wishes us to come as soon as possible.

Trusting dear Sir for a favourable reply

I am yours respectfully

E. M. Stephen

Ellen Terrick

In this letter Ellen referred to an altercation between her son Frank Darby and Mr Robarts the manager at Coranderrk.

*Ellen Terrick, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
19 October, 1911³⁵²*

Dear Sir

I now take up my pen to write you these few lines to let you know I saw Mr Robart about John and I leaving the station altogether[;] this morning Mr Robart sent William Login down to Mr McAlister to hurry John & I to come to Healesville to see Frank as he said the Policeman very likely would take him to town either by the 11 train or night train[.] I knew nothing about Frank being in the lockup untill I arrived at Healesville and only that there was a Const[.] I and my daughter were not present[.] Mr Robart told me Staurday he was done with Frank[.] I went back to Tarawarra the same night[.] Frank stayed at Mrs Hunter's & it seemed whilst I was away Monday morning Frank came down to his sister Mary to get his blankets and clothes[;] after Mr Robart telling me he was done with Frank of course he took it in his head that he was off the station altogether[;] while he was going away up the road Mr Robart called out to Frank and said where are you going[?] Frank said Im going away you said I was off the station[.] Mary was there also[.] Mr Robart asked her where is he going[.] Mary told him since Frank heard he was off the station & not only that but that Mr Robart was always saying he would send him to the Homes at any time[.] Frank was a little obstinate after that[;] then when Mr Robart was calling him back Frank said to him I wont come back for you Mr Robart if you come near me Ill hit you[;] he was in a violent temper[;] instead of Mr Robart taking and flogging him as a manager might of done he went down to his office & wrote a note into Constable Hutchinson to take Frank as he was abusive[;] that was monday morning[;] in the afternoon the constable came & took Frank and kept him there till it was Court day from Monday till Thursday[.] I the mother knew nothing about the Court[.] I told Mr Robart I had intended to live on Abel Terricks piece of ground[.] Mr Robart reckoned it was too close for Frank as he would be coming about the station and didnt approve of it[;] then again Mr Robart thought the best plan was to let Frank go to the Homes but I dont care about him going there[.] I would sooner go off the station and take Frank with me[.] I dont wish to come back any more[.] Mr Robart told me I would have to go away from this part altogether with Frank[.] Frank came out of the

Lockup today after appearing before the Court[.] Would you kindly answer this letter please Mr Ditchburn

I will bring this letter to a close

I am your obedient servant

Ellen Terrick

Janet Turner

*Jeanette Turner, Lake Condah, to Mr Murray, Chairman, BPA,
21 November, 1912³⁵³*

Sir

I am writing to you asking if the Board would kindly oblige me in letting me have a free pass for three months to go to Lindenow to my brother's place (Donald McCreddie) for the good of my health, also I would like very much to take my two children with me.

Trusting you will kindly grant my request.

I am

yours respectfully

Jeanette Turner

At the bottom of Janet's letter the matron, Mrs Stähle, wrote in support that Janet had suffered bad health for two years. 'She is a well conducted woman and exceptionally tidy. She is a widow, and consequently unable to pay her own travelling expenses.' Rev. Stähle also wrote a letter to the Board on 10 December 1912 asking that a female Salvation Army worker be in Melbourne to meet Janet when she arrived and to take her to the Salvation Army Home to stay before leaving for Lindenow.

Ellen Blair

*Ellen Blair, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
22 November, 1912³⁵⁴*

Dear Sir,

I am applying for a pass. I would like to have it as soon as possible as the heat is very trying to me again.

yours truly

Ellen Blair

*Ellen Blair, Coranderrk, to John Murray, Chief Secretary,
19 October, 1915³⁵⁵*

Sir

Just a line asking you if I could have a pass for myself & husband to return again back to Purnim. I have not been in good health ever since I came back[.] have been always ailing. And I should like to go

back before the warm weather sets in. It is even very trying to me now[;] will you kindly oblige

yours truly
Ellen Blair

Mr Robarts forwarded this letter, noting that Ellen had suffered a hemorrhage of the lungs the month before, and that she had frequent attacks of asthma which were very distressing. He thought a transfer would be to her advantage because the Purnim district suited her health much better than the damp climate of Coranderrk.

Ellen Blair, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 7 August, 1918³⁵⁶

Dear Sir

I write these few lines to you just to let you know how we are getting on here[.] I thought that this place was only for the old people of this place. There are the two Rose's boys living in the little hut, that was to be pulled down for to make a shed for this station cart and they causes rows and fighting the old people[;] young Frank Clark is with them so I would like very much if you could have them hunted away from here The old people would be far happier if they were away from here[;] they even put stones for a monument and marked out a grave where I was knocked down by one of them[;] so please get them off the place as soon as possible

yours respectfully
Ellen Blair

Ellen Blair, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, October, 1918³⁵⁷

Dear Sir

I am writing to ask if a pass could be granted to me to go to Lake Tyers for a change[.] I am not feeling well at all lately[.] I could stay with my sister Mrs Moffatt[;] that is why I am asking for a pass[;] if I could have it at once

yours truly
Ellen Blair

The Secretary replied to Ellen that there was no house available for her to stay in at Lake Tyers at present.

Ellen Blair, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, March, 1919³⁵⁸

Dear Sir

I am asking again if a pass could be granted to me to go to Lake Tyers for a change[.] I need it badly[.] Ive just not long been out of the hospital and still feel very weak[.] But I do want to go away for a change[.] And I would like to have Ada Austin to travel with me[.]

And if a return pass could be granted to us both
trusting you will oblige

Yours truly

Ellen Blair

The Secretary replied that the Board did not have money available for such purposes.

Mary Austin

In June 1912 the BPA moved the Austin family to Lake Condah from the Framlingham reserve where they were living in very poor conditions. The Board decided the family would be better off living on a managed station.

Mary Austin, Lake Condah, to Miss Murray³⁵⁹, 22 April, 1913³⁶⁰

To Our dear lady

Dear Miss Murray

in dropping you a line hoping it will reach you in the best of health as it leaves us well at present[.] Dear Miss Murray I went up to Mr Stahle this morning and asked him can I go down home for a while to take my baby for a change and Mr Stahle told me I can go so he gave me permission. Dear Lady I would like very much to be down in time for the Warrnambool races by the end of next week. Mr Stahle asked me how I was going and I told him that our Lady Miss Murray would see into it for me so dear Miss Murray try and get the pass as soon as possible as Mr Stahle his letting me go for a few weeks[;] he is letting the board know to day that he has gave me permission to go[.] Dear Miss Murray I want you to get the pass for me and forward it on to me[;] pass for 2.

I remain yours faithfully

M L Austin

Dear Miss Murray never mind the children passes[;] they will wait the Christmas Holidays.

From 1914 to 1916 Mary periodically applied for the renewal of her family's license to live at Lake Condah. In August 1916 the BPA Secretary directed the manager of Lake Condah to inform Mary's husband Chris that unless he conformed to the rules of the Board he and his family would be removed from the station. The Secretary added, '[i]t would be as well if you were to also notify Mrs Austin of this determination in order that she may understand and realise her position.'

*Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA,
6 November, 1916³⁶¹*

Your letter of the 12th August was read to Chris & Mary Austin together, & they are evidently determined not only to violate the rules

& regulations of the station, but to treat all communications I receive from you with contempt. In my opinion it is out of all reason that this family should now be maintained by the Board, or allowed to remain on the station. Chris Austin who is a strong healthy man should be compelled to work...Mrs Austin is also a strong young woman. This family could earn a good living anywhere, but never will exert themselves while they remain on an aboriginal station.

Mary Austin informed the matron she was not going to rear children for the benefit of the Board or managers, she wishes all her family to go out working & objects to them working on an aboriginal reserve.

Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 8 June, 1917³⁶²

I wish to inform you that Mary Austin [and] her family left here this morning[;] went over to Ardens. Mary Austin told me she did not want to live on the station any longer [and] that she was going back to Purnim[.] I asked her if she had permission to leave the station, & [she] stated she did not require permission.

I have lodged a good many complaints about this family[.] They still persist in violating the rules and regulations of the station. During the last month Chris Austin has been doing nothing going back [and] forwards to Ardens.

Mary Austin, Lake Condah, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah, 5 July, 1917³⁶³

Please Sir

this is to let you know that I dont want Jim Arden coming to my house[;] when ever he comes from Heywood he makes a practice of pulling up outside my place[;] he called hear once with liqer in him & he comes & asked for meat which I never gave him[;] he is a very bad man[;] he trys to do harm to every body. he gets enough money to bye meat for his family. he is a perfect nuisance about the station[;] he thinks himself some great man[;] he wants to be kept down. Hopeing you will see into the matter.

I am your obedient

M Austin

Mary Austin, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 18 July, 1917³⁶⁴

Dear Sir

I write to let you know that I am leaving Lake Condah sooner than I meant but my husband and three grown up children are in good work. My eldest daughter is earning £1-5- a week and her board milking[;] my husband and son are cutting timber contract[;] my third daughter is going to a niece of the matrons on a farm. we have a house no rent to pay away from Purnim township on a farm. thank you very much for the kind way you have fed and clothed me and my family for

five years and medicine when sick and a good home, and am very sorry to leave Mr and Mrs Galbraith as they have been so good to me and am very glad to get way from the Ardens family as they are always giving trouble on the station when they where living hear on the station and now when they are off[.] Mr and Mrs Galbraith have been so good & kind to me and my family and they have found my daughter very honest and reliable in the house[.] I do feel very sorry to leave Mrs Galbraith as they was a greatest comfort in any time of trouble[;] so I thank you again for your kindness to me & my family.

I am your Obedient Servant Mary Austin

Mr Galbraith forwarded Mary's letter to the Board with his own note that Mary and her family were leaving that day for Warrnambool. He commented, 'Mary Austin is a careful housekeeper & saving. I have always given her great credit for her cleanliness of herself, her children & her home. They have gone away in good warm clothing from head to foot.'

Maggie Allen

In 1914 Maggie, already married and widowed twice before, wished to marry Jack Gibbs. However, the Board refused to give its permission because Maggie was of both European and Aboriginal descent and Jack was of full Aboriginal descent. Subsequently, Jack, without Maggie's knowledge, asked whether he could marry Effie Mobourne instead.

*Maggie Allen, Badger Creek, to Mr Crawford, manager, Lake Condah,
23 May, 1914³⁶⁵*

Just a line to ask you if it is true about Jack Gibbs is to be married to a widow woman[;] if is could you be so kind has to let me know[;] before he went away he got me into a certain condition and shall come on him[;] he took 26 shillings away from me and he said he drank it all and he also wrote to me last week and told me that his friends was going together and was to see you about me to marry him and if he wasnt allowed to stay on the mission that he would leave the station and do for our selves[.] Mr Crawford it is very wrong of Jack to treat me like this[.] I havent been well since he went away and please ask him to return my wedding ring[;] now Dear Sir I will trust in you to write back and let me know has a christian friend[;] with kind love

yours truly

Maggie Allen

Jack also wrote to me to come down and he would meet me at Milltown[.] I cant understand him at all treating me like this[;] he could off written back and told me not to worry over him any more like a strait forward man not a sneaking man

*Maggie Allen, Lake Condah, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary, June, 1914*³⁶⁶

Dear Sir

I have the pleasure in writing you a few lines[.] Sir I am letting you know that Im here and Im trailing Jack Gibbs up as I have heard he was going to be married to a widow name of Mrs Mobourne. I never thought that things was going to occur. Dear Sir I may state to you that Jack Gibbs & I went down & saw you & Mr Ditchburn @ the office & had a chat with you personally & as we were sure of being settled it gave me every satisfaction[.] Sir I am very sorry to mention to you that Im in a certain condition by him & I want him to marry me without going to any further proceedings & Im glad to mention that I have great love for him & I will do my very best to make him homely & comfortable. Dear Sir Im sure you help me[,] will carry me through & we have always cast our every reliance on you[.] Sir Im glad to say that Mr Captain Crawford had us both up @ his office & we had a chat over the matter. I will be more pleased as well as grateful for your kind assistance for us by having us both married[;] trusting & hoping with good result this is all @ present

I remain your
sincere friend
Mrs Maggie Allen

On the same date Jack also wrote to the Secretary stating that he now wanted to marry Maggie Allen rather than Effie Mobourne. Jack and Maggie were married on 22 July, 1914.

Maggie Mobourne

*Mr Greene, manager, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary BPA,
28 August 1916*³⁶⁷

The condition of Maggie Mobourne seems to me to be very doubtful and [Ernest] Mobourne is afraid that he will not be able to look after her properly. She appears to be very morose and does not seem to recognise people and will need careful watching.

Later in 1916 Maggie spent time in an asylum in Melbourne. She had not long returned to Lake Tyers when she wrote the following letter:

*Maggie Mobourne, Lake Tyers, to the Superintendent, Police Barracks,
Melbourne, 6 January, 1917*³⁶⁸

Sir

I wish to know from you whether it is right and proper that I an Aboriginal woman should be bound down on this station whilst others who have been taken to different stations from here have been allowed to return to their homes again[;] especially as another woman who was

taken from here by an Order in Council now she is off the station with her family[;] why shouldnt I be allowed[?] not always being told you can't leave as you are under an Order in Council[;] how long does it last[?] I do not think this is fair to me to be treated so[;] besides just now I need a change very much and I must go at once before I get worse[.] I do not feel well since I returned from Melbourne[.] Trusting you will kindly assist me out of this

I am yours respectfully
Maggie Mobourne

Maggie was not permitted to leave Lake Tyers and she died there several months later on 30 May, 1917.

Rose Foster

In 1915 the BPA obtained an Order-in-Council to move the Foster family from Lake Tyers to Lake Condah.

*Rose Foster, Lake Condah, to the Governor of Victoria,
24 November, 1916³⁶⁹*

His Excellency the Governor

Sir Arthur Stanley

I am applying to you your Excellency for your help

Your Excellency

I have received any instructing from the Members of the Boards of my returning back home again to the Lake Tyers Mission Station

Your Excellency

I wish to appeal for a free pass for myself and two children

Trusting your Excellency will see into it

I am yours most humble servant

Rose Foster

The Board refused to grant Rose's request for a pass.

Kitty Johnson

*Kitty Johnson, Lake Tyers, to Mr McLeod, Chief Secretary,
28 April, 1917³⁷⁰*

Dear Sir

I wish you would give me permission to take my little grandson maize picking to Orbost because if I left him behind I couldn't rest and he would be falling into mischief[;] so please let me take him down to the maize picking it being the only chance of making money to buy clothes and blankets with.

Hoping you will oblige
I am yours respectfully
Kitty Johnson

Kitty's request was refused.

Violet Mullett

In April 1918 Violet and her husband Alex were staying at a small mission station at Bunyip in Gippsland, run by Sister Isabella Hetherington. The mission consisted of a small wooden house and tents on 60 acres of poor, partly cultivated land.

Violet Mullett, c/o Miss Hetherington, Mission House, Bunyip, to Secretary, BPA, April, 1918³⁷¹

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to let you know that we are here only for a few months as Mr Robart told us that if we went to the office that the Board would not permit us a license of 6 months & that we would have to leave the station, but this is our first time off the station, & we want to have a few months trial to see how we can get on. We had no time to come to the office as our train got in late & so thats the reason why we did not call[.] Tom Dunolly told us that he seen you in the streets & was speaking to you about us & he also told Robart about it & Mr Robart told us that he had fix things alright with the board. but when Tom Dunolly told him he did not know what to say. So we are here only for a while[;] we dont want to go to Lake Tyers as there is a woman name Alice Logan there & me & her can never hit it so I would sooner stay at Coranderrk[;] would you please give me further news as this is my first time. I dont like to go to Lake Tyers & I am in a condition & I want my mother Annie Manton to look after me

trusting you will oblige yours truly

Violet Mullett

also want a license please

Secretary, BPA, to Violet Mullett, Bunyip, 25 April, 1918³⁷²

Memo/

With reference to your letter asking that your mother Mrs Annie Manton may be allowed to look after you at a later time, I have by direction to inform you that you may return to Coranderrk for a time when required.

yours faithfully

Secretary

Eliza Edwards

Eliza Edwards, Lake Tyers, to Secretary, BPA, 9 June, 1918³⁷³

Sir

I am now having the pleasure of conveying to you by reporting myself to the Board of Aborigines as regarding the false report that was handed forward to the Board[.] I have heard that it was Willie Johnson that was making false statements against me wrongfully[.] Sir I am

quite confident with the remarks or expression used by me with the little grievance between myself & his family. And as they were trying to accuse me for using obscene language & reporting me to Mr Ferguson. I have explain myself that there was no expression used by me of that sort as well to Mr Ferguson and as for the little faults between us I would honestly say this[:] I had no ill feeling towards them as I have always tried to hold up my reputation without being brought into trouble by anyone Sir[,] and if you have received their reports to hand I may say that Im quite clear of all false reports[.] Also I am writing to the Board the whole truth & nothing but the truth which is my duty and this I would say that I dont wish to bring anyone on this station by reporting them to the Board falsely unless I know its the whole truth or by bring it before Mr Ferguson[:] that is our stand point of view with the whole truth & nothing but the truth[.] And with the reports that was despatch falsely to the Board against me I would thank the Board if they would have it withdraw[.] I would also be thankful to have you reply[:] trusting the Board will overlook the matter

I remain
yours sincere friend
Mrs W Edwards

Mary McRae

*Mary McRae, Coranderrk, to Mr Bowser, Chief Secretary,
18 June, 1918³⁷⁴*

Dear Sir

Just a line to let you know we are preparing to go to Lake Tyers God willing and hope to be leaving by Thursday from here and Mr Bowser May the way be clear that Alex myself & children can have the pleasure of seeing you for a few minutes while we are in town. May we not be disappointed at not being able to see you as when we left for Bunyip not so very long we called & was very much disappointed at not being able to see you[:] we met Mr Callaway & he asked us what we were doing there[:] we told him we came to see you[.] Praise the Lord may we see your kind face as we do believe its of God you have excepted us both up at the State[:] we do thank the Lord for all he has done for us through you as we were always unable to see the other Chief Secretary and by the Goodness of the Lord through you we do believe you will kindly accept us if its just for a few minutes[.] I will close[.] Believe me hoping & trusting I am not doing harm by writing to you[.] I thought I would write beforehand as we were told we wouldnt be able to see you

I am yours truly
Mary E McRae

*Mary McRae, Lake Tyers, to Mr Bowser, Chief Secretary, nd*³⁷⁵

Dear Mr Bowser

Just a line to let you know we arrived safely & are at the present living in Frank and Lizzie's house[.] Mr Ferguson wants us to live in the house you had inspected while on your visit[;] the people who have been here for yrs told us since Mrs Thomas Scott died...with tuberculosis that same house has not been fumigated or cleaned out[;] we are also told that young James Scott who is a son of deceased suffered for some time with the same thing[.] Ted O'Rourke who has been here from a boy & his mother advises us to stay where we are till the new houses are made[.] Mr Bowser you have seen my little ones & I would not like to go into that house with my little baby boy[;] the second girl has been suffering some time ago with her lungs & we nearly lost her but by the Goodness of God he has spared her life[;] the manager knows nothing much about the houses[.] Mr Bowser I dont wish to move[;] please do not let us move please[.] I shall be pleased to hear from you[.] I know Mr Ferguson wont like me writing to you but I know & feel I am quite safe in writing to you at any time[.] Praise God Mr Ferguson seems to be different to us but Praise God we know we must bare all things for the Dear Lords sake[.] I will give him no chance to report me to the members of the Board[;] nothing pleases us more is that you are on the Aborigines Board[.] May God bless you keep you[.] I thank you ever so much for your kind attendance to us while we were in the office[;] we shall never forget your kindness[;] thank you ever so much for what you gave us[;] we are very grateful to you[;] we shall be very glad to see you when you come again[.] Mr Bowser about that house its never been cleaned out since the poor woman died[.] I will close[.] I shall be pleased to hear from you.

I am your's truly

Mary E McRae

hope you will help us

Mr McAlister told us we could stay with Frank

*Mary McRae, Lake Tyers, to Mr Bowser, Chief Secretary,
27 August, 1918*³⁷⁶

Sir

I now answer your most kind and welcome letter which I received some few weeks ago[.] I was pleased to hear from you and that you had received the Boomerang safely[.] I had no money at the time and I thought when my brother Frank & his wife where on their way to Melbourne I would send it with them[;] both Alex and myself will be so pleased when we know you and Dear Mrs Bowser will come and visit us[.] I do hope and trust you are quite well again as it was in the papers about your illness[;] whenever I am able to get any daily papers I and Alex always look to see if there is anything about you as we take

very great interest in your speeches & other things etc[;] we believe Mr McAlister is coming very soon[;] do try and come please as we will be awfully disappointed[;] hoping & trusting by God's Grace you will soon be quite better again and now Mr Bowser I want to tell you that I wrote a letter to Mrs Bon as she was in town as I have some very bad teeth and want to get them out by the dentist and I asked Mrs Bon...if she thought she could help me by getting permission from the Board for me to have my mother over here just to take care of my youngest baby till I have all my teeth drawn[.] I can hardly eat my food properly as on account of my bad teeth there is no-one of whom I can get in the way of attending my baby[.] I prefer my mother as I am so accustomed of having her with me[;] she is so good to me[;] may you help me[.] Mr McAlister has told us that when anything is to be done it all goes through him so one doesnt know what to do[.] I just thought I'd let you know beforehand[.] I will at once forward a letter on to the secretary Mr Parker through Mr Ferguson this morning asking the Board's permission[;] hoping & trusting they will kindly grant my request[;] if Mr Ferguson tells Mr Parker there is no accommodation for mother Mr Bowser I have a tent in which she and stepfather could have[;] the houses are not up yet[.] I shall be so pleased when you members come as there is so much talk about the dirty boards all the men had to scrub what came from Coranderrk[.] Mr Ferguson thinks they are disgraceful[;] from what we are told the station men have to go up to Nowa Nowa and bring all the things down themselves for they are all complaining about the dirty boards from Coranderrk & its a disgrace[;] as I say myself we must be grateful & thankful we have a sheltering over our heads[;] it would be a good thing if our members were to come as soon as they can[.] Alex & I are waiting patiently to go into our new house[;] all the boards that came first are all scrubbed and are piled up down at the back jetty waiting for the different sections as they were not put together[.] Dear Mr Bowser I want to ask you if could kindly help Alex & I to get a boat for our own use that we can row anywhere we like to go[.] Mrs O'Rourke has her own boat but one has to pay just for the use of it & I thought I would write & ask you to see if you could get a cheap one and Alex would pay you as he is getting a good pay now[;] he is wood carting & milking in the mornings[;] we want to save up so as to get a boat that it will be our own property[;] we will send you the money for it[.] I always like to take the children over to the sea beach a saturday but its awkward to get a boat & I thought Id ask you if you can help us please[.] I will close from your true friend

Mary E McRae

*Mary McRae, Lake Tyers, to Mr Bowser, Chief Secretary,
6 September, 1918³⁷⁷*

Sir

I now write you these few lines hoping and trusting by God's Grace you are keeping well as we are the same at present and now I

wish to thank you for your kind orders which were given by Mr Parker's letter to me which I received on Saturday[.] I was very pleased to know you had received my letter about my teeth[.] I went to Mr Ferguson this morning and told him I had to have my teeth attended to at Bairnsdale[;] he did not like the idea of me telling him that[;] he said I need not of gone through that trouble to make that arrangement to the Board[;] there is a Dentist which comes to Cunninghame & there is another one comes pass Nowa Nowa to Orbost and he is a splendid Dentist[.] I have nine left & would like them all out[.] Mr Ferguson is going to let all who want their teeth out come with me to have them all done the same time[.] I told him it would be close for us to come home as Mr Ferguson will run the motor boat up[;] he will first arrange about the Dentist when he is to pass Nowa Nowa[.] I believe once a month he comes to Orbost[.] Mr Ferguson never said anything to me about my teeth[;] as Mr Parker said he has accordingly written to Mr Ferguson[.] I shall be so pleased to have them all out Mr Bowser as I have very bad teeth & about mother I am pleased she will be allowed to come as soon as the new cottages will be put up[;] for I will be glad to have my mother near me[;] about the Boat I was glad to hear there will be plenty of Boats available[.] Colonel Semmens came here on either Tuesday or Wednesday[;] he did not come round but just went to see the school children[.] I think Mr Ferguson is going to Melbourne may be tonight as he has been telling some of the men here[.] Mr Bowser you Members dont know half what is going on here[;] on Wednesday night it seems some one had broken into the store where we get the rations from[.] I would not say anything at all about it but its disgraceful[.] Mr Ferguson has been keeping candles for sick people & it seems a whole packet of candles had been taken[.] Mr Ferguson has been making inquiries but cannot find any proof[;] it is a real shame as on account of others have to run even short of sugar candles & other things etc[.] I dont like to be a tale bearer but I dont think its right for people to be so deceiving to steal[;] the window was found opened[.] I dont know whats going to be done yet[.] I would not like Mr Ferguson to know I had written and told about that case[.] Mr Bowser if nothing is done this will always be going on[.] I have also been told before we came there was a bottle of beer even taken from the Public House from Nowa Nowa & also from the station motor boat a tin of jam[.] Residents of Lake Tyers seem to complain about the bad behaviours that are going on here at present[.] I suppose when Mr Ferguson goes to town he will let the Board know[.] Mr Bowser it has made us run short of candles[.] I think its about a week since the last candles where given out[;] it would be very nice if we had money enough to buy from the Government store but we have to wait from one week to another[;] our sugar does not seem to last at all[.] Mr Bowser are we right in asking for what we want here without any excuses being made as we go by what our Members tell us when they visit us[;] whatever we want we must have[.] I just want to let you

know being our Head of the Aborigines Board as I correspond to you
always[.] I like to let you know[.] I will close

With best regards from
yours obediently
Mary E McRae

*Mr Bowser, Chief Secretary, to Mrs McRae, Lake Tyers,
13 September, 1918³⁷⁸*

Mr Ferguson is in charge of the station, and if you want anything you
should go to him for it, or if it is a matter that should be mentioned to
Mrs Ferguson, and not to Mr Ferguson, then you should go to her. Do
not write any more letters to me personally about matters at the station.
Speak to Mr Ferguson, and if you cannot get the matter attended to,
write to Mr Parker, who will tell me, if it is necessary to so do.

*Mary McRae, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
29 July, 1919³⁷⁹*

Sir

I have the pleasure in writing you these few lines to let you
know Alex wrote a letter to the Board asking if permission could be
granted me to go to Coranderrk before being closed and stay with Mrs
Richards for a month as we never heard[;] we were wondering whether
you had received the letter[.] I dont feel to well at times and feel I
would like to go away if its only for a month[.] Alex has also asked if
the Board would grant me a Pass for myself and two children[.] Alex
also mentioned he would be willing to pay the passes back whatever
the prices would be[.] Mr Parker was there any harm in Alex writing[?]
we thought as long as we gave Mr Ferguson the letter the Board would
not object for me to go away for a while[;] may I not do any harm by
even writing this letter to you for I am almost sure you would mind
me[.] I would not like any trouble to arise through this letter but I
thought I would drop you these few lines[;] kindly help us

I will close

I shall be pleased to
hear through Mr Ferguson
what arrangements can
be made

Believe me
I am yours obediently
Mary E McRae

The Board decided that no passes could be granted at present.

Maggie Johnson

Maggie Johnson, Lake Tyers, to Mrs Bon, 28 September, 1919³⁸⁰

Dear Mrs Bon,

I want to ask your permission if I could go for a change
with Lorna[;] shes bad again[;] she is not able to walk about[;] we have
to carry her about[;] dear friend will you be so kind & put it before the

Board[;] my little girls very weak[;] we get food from Mrs Dobie for her such as eggs & butter[;] the doctor said that shes got a weak heart & that I have to take great care of her[.] I only have to leave it into Gods hands[;] dear friend this is all at present[;] goodbye

yours respectfully

Maggie Johnson

I want an answer back next week please goodbye

Mrs Bon wrote to Mr Bowser enclosing Maggie's letter asking him to grant the request 'of a poor mother for her dying child'. The Board referred the request to Bruce Ferguson who had no objection to Maggie going away for a change but doubted the wisdom of moving Lorna in her present condition. Lorna had been ill for over a year with heart trouble.

Minna Hood

After Minna's father died she was sent from Lake Tyers to the Riddell Girls' Home and later to the Oakleigh Reformatory.

Minna Hood, Oakleigh Reformatory, to Mrs Bon, February, 1921³⁸¹

Dear Mrs Bon

Just a few lines to let you known that I am keeping well, but I dont feel content here among these girls but I would like be out now. but I would go to Lake Tyers aging[;] besides[?] to wicked now but I sooner go to Corrderrk[.] I think Corrderrk is better than Lake Tyers. that why I never write to me brother, Ill not going to worry about them[;] never mind, Ill pray to God to help me, he is only my best friend[.] Ill pray every morning and night[;] so this is all the news tell you so

May God Bless you

I am yours grateful

Child Minna Martha Hood

In March 1921 the Board allowed Minna a holiday at Lake Tyers. Tragically Minna died soon after her return to the reformatory, on 30 June 1921. She was buried at Coranderrk.

Nellie Blair

In 1921 Nellie ran away from Bunyip where she lived with the missionary Isabella Hetherington. Nellie and another Aboriginal girl, Kate McLellan, made their way to Lake Tyers.

Nellie Blair, Lake Tyers, to BPA, 18 May, 1921³⁸²

Sir

May I be privileged of conveying a few lines to the board of Aborigines to let you know that Kate Foster³⁸³ & I are here at Lake Tyers as we have left Bunyip about two weeks or little more than a week and as for our reasons why we have left it because Miss

Hetherington has been to harsh with us ever since we have been in her care & she even told me & Kate Foster to clear out & never to go near her again & we took her advice, we have stood her hard ways so long[.] I may say now that I am staying with Mr & Mrs Gibbs as Mrs Gibbs is a friend of mine as she is a aunt of mine & I am staying with her. Sir I would be so glad if the board of Aborigines would kindly grant my wishes of remaining here at Lake Tyers with my relatives. I would be so thankful with the Board in granting my wish accordingly to my feeling & to be under the care of Mr Ferguson here at Lake Tyers

I remain
yours truly
Nellie Blair

The Board decided that Nellie could not remain at Lake Tyers because she was not a Victorian Aborigine; she must return to Miss Hetherington.

Elsie Barrett

Elsie Barrett, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, July, 1921³⁸⁴

Dear Sir

I now take the pleasure in dropping you these few lines hoping you will answer this letter as I am asking you will kindly send me a pass to come to Melbourne to get my teeth seen to as my teeth are giving me trouble[;] I want to come to...Melbourne because I do not want any body else to fiddle around with my teeth because the Doctor said at the Melbourne Dental hospital that at any time I want my teeth seen to he will fix it for me and that he does not want anybody else to interfere with my teeth[.] Mr Parker Mr Ferguson wanted me to get them done here but I would rather get them done in Melbourne because the Dentist understand my teeth better than any body else does so that is why I want to get them done in Melbourne, Mr Parker I will be looking forward for a pass from you[.] Mr Parker I am very sorry I ever put my foot back on the Station[.] I am very miserable here and discontented because I fell in love with a boy here and they wont allow me to have him but I am going to have him[.] I am my own boss[.] I am twenty five years of age now[;] they wont allow me because he is an halfcast and I will have him[;] they want to force me to have another man and I dont want them[.] I want the man who I am after so I am full up with the place since I came back to it[.] I am sorry I never stopped in Melbourne[;] now I suppose it is no use of being sorry[;] now if they dont allow me to get married to Carter I wont stop here[.] I will come back to Melbourne again so I must close with best respects

I remain
yours sincerely E. Barrett

Parker forwarded this letter to the manager at Lake Tyers, asking him to inform Elsie that she would have to get her teeth seen to in Bairnsdale and requesting a report about her wanting to marry Cecil Carter. Mr Ferguson replied that Elsie and Cecil wanted to get married but that Elsie's mother Lizzie Jennings and her grandfather Andrew Chase had opposed the marriage because Cecil was from NSW. Ferguson thought that Lizzie would eventually change her mind, however, as Elsie's grandfather had now agreed to the marriage.

Regarding Missionaries and Station Managers

The letters in this section concern the women's attitudes towards the missionaries and station managers. These letters vary considerably in content, from expressions of warmth to outright condemnation.

The section begins with the girlhood letters of Bessy Flower (later Cameron) who in 1867 left her mission home in Albany, Western Australia, to come to live at Ramahyuck mission in Gippsland. During the voyage and the first few months at the mission she wrote letters to Anne Camfield who had run the Albany mission. Clearly Bessy was very fond of Anne, whom she addressed as 'Missie' and in one letter: 'dearest more than mother'. Bessy soon grew to respect the missionary at Ramahyuck, Friedrich Hagenauer, and in the early 1870s wrote a letter defending him from outside accusations of ill-treatment of an Aboriginal man. Later, in the 1890s, Emily Stephen would also write to the Board in defence of Hagenauer.

More commonly, however, the women's letters concerning missionaries and managers expressed unhappiness with the treatment they and other Aborigines were receiving. Mission administrators were the first point of authority over Aboriginal people and away from the eyes of the BPA they had wide scope for exercising power as they saw fit. However, they were nevertheless responsible to the Board and the Aborigines knew this. Here the women's writing skills became all-important. Through letters many women took the initiative of informing the Board of injustice and bad treatment. This was especially the case in the early 1880s, before the 1886 Act forced many people off the stations. During this time a number of women at Coranderrk made complaints about the management of the station. Their complaints resulted in or formed part of official inquiries into the station's management.

Station managers became increasingly intolerant of Aboriginal resistance in the early twentieth century, but this did not prevent some women speaking out against injustice. Indeed some made reference to the undesirable personal qualities of the missionaries and managers themselves: in 1900 Maggie Mobourne wrote of Rev. Stähle: 'He's not a fit man for the position he holds but is dragging us down into hell rather than helping us rise.' In 1918 Amelia Rose wrote angrily to the Board about the treatment that her niece Winnie was receiving from the manager and his wife at Lake Condah: 'I believe she is treated very bad....Fancy having a manager like that over a mission station. I think its disgraceful.'

Bessy Cameron

In 1867 Bessy and several other Aboriginal girls including Emily Brindle travelled to Victoria from Western Australia. Anne Camfield was the missionary at Annesfield, the mission where Bessy spent her childhood.

*Bessy Flower, Port Adelaide, to Anne Camfield, Annesfield, Albany,
12 June, 1867³⁸⁵*

My dearest Missie

I know you will be glad to hear that we arrived quite safely & had such a nice voyage.

The Captain kindly allowed us to go on deck by the funnel. We went to church on Sunday morning, at first we could not find one but a lady shewed us where to go & spoke to the clerk to give us some prayer books & hymn books. The service was beautiful[.] Oh! the music & singing was delicious, they sang the Amen after everything. In the afternoon we went for a walk & we met the clergyman, he said that he would see us tomorrow (Monday)[;] his name is Mr ____[;] oh he was so kind & another gentleman his name is Mr ____.

They came yesterday & took us up to Adelaide, fancy dear Missie was it not kind of them? we went into the Legislative House & into the Assembly room, & then we went into the museum. There were such a lot of birds & all sorts of things, it was so pretty.

Afterwards we went to the gardens, a baker drove past us in a cart, & dropped a double loaf in the mud, we could not help laughing. Mr __ called out to him but he did not hear. Emily went to pick it up & she told me to tell you, it was so hot & smelt so nice, she was going to pick a piece out of it, (we have such fun with her)[.] After we had gone to the gardens, we saw a tiger, a bear, & all sorts of peacocks[;] there was a white one, a lama & ostrich the place is laid out beautifully, I only wish that you were with us[.]

The gentleman shewed us four guns that the English took from the Russians at the Crimea. There was the prickly fur in the garden. Mr __ knows Mr __, he said that he would like some of those pink everlastings, I wish you could send some to him, he lives at the Port. When Mr __ mentioned your name, the clergyman said "Oh! she is a great friend of Bishop Halle's is she not? I know you will like to know that there were such kind people. I have bought a mug for Louisa to drink her water at the table. Mrs __ says she will bring it. I have only spent 3/6[.] I am going to leave the rest for Melbourne. I hope you are all quite well, Ada was not sea sick, but we were – Rhoda & Emily were the worst. How did the singing get on? On Sunday I thought of it several times, & on Sunday I fancied I could hear Martie asking me if I had all my music ready. On Thursday I wished I was going to the Church instead of rocking about in the steamer. One day when we were on deck the second officer came to us & was talking about

Albany, he said they considered it a great banishment to be sent there, that nothing grew but rocks & stones & I said that that added to the beauty of the place, he laughed so, & said a good deal more, but when I could not say any more, I spoke about the climate being the best & he said "Oh, you are right there, it is the best. I did not answer rudely though, dear Missie.

I hope you will be able to read this, I shall write from Melbourne too. Please give my best love to Miss __ and __ (if she will accept it) & my love to poor dear Mother & tell her that Ada & I are quite well. I am sorry that I am come to the bottom of my paper, I was going to cross it but I heard you say it was rude & so I have divided another sheet. I have written to poor Bobby[;] will you please send it to him? We will think of dear Martie's & Miss __'s birthday. I wish them many happy returns of the day. Whenever I talk of coming home again, Rhoda says she feels so jealous. Mr __ says will you tell Miss __ that her baby is coming to tease her again bye and bye. I forgot I have said nothing about Nora's baby, he has been so screaming & crying in the night, I often wish I could pitch him overboard, he is asleep now. Please will give my best love to Phoebe[.] I will try & write to her soon. I hope to hear from you soon. Will you please give my grateful love to Martie & accept the same.

From your grateful & loving

B[essy]

I am very sorry I did not see Mr __[.] Mrs __ was so kind to us all the way down. I am so glad she came with us, all the girls send their best love to you all.

Bessy Flower, Victoria St, South Yarra, to Anne Camfield, Annesfield, Albany, 17 June, 1867³⁸⁶

My own dearest Missie,

Oh, how I wish you were here with us. I received your dear letter on Saturday morning on board the steamer. We had a very quick passage from Adelaide. On Saturday morning as [we] were coming to the pier I was looking out for Mr H[agenauer][.] After sometime we saw a gentleman with a dark beard, when he saw us he smiled & shook his hand. I could not help laughing he looked so funny. There was another clergyman (who is going to Sydney) came with him. I must finish about Adelaide first. Mr __ met us the next day & took us to see the Town Hall & treated us with lollies & oranges. When I think of all the kindness we have received from people we have not seen I cannot tell you how I love you for taking us out of the bush & making us what we are. I hope you are all quite well. We are going to Gipps Land on Friday. So when this reaches you I hope we shall be settled in our new home. Emily is going with us; Mr H[agenauer] thinks it will be better than separating from us.

We went to the Scotch Church yesterday, we did not kneel down at all, we stood up while Mr __ prayed, & sat down whilst they sang;

once when they were going to pray, I was going to kneel down & I felt very funny[.] I shall now tell you about Mr M[enzies] & his family, he is something like Mr __ of Adelaide, only he has a black beard & Mr ____ had red. His wife is a kind lady & very much like Mrs ____[:] there are two young ladies only, & they are children of the first Mrs M[enzies][.] After church as we came out there were 3 or 4 gentlemen & ladies, who shook hands with us & asked us how we were. There was a lady dressed in black, her name is Mrs ____ & she said she knew Mr ____ & told me to tell him when I wrote, to say that she was asking about him, she had a kind face. In the afternoon we went to the Sunday School, & Mr H[agenauer] spoke to the teachers & scholars about his mission station, when he had done speaking, Mr M[enzies] told them that they wanted a Harmonium at Gippsland. I asked the children to save up their pence & shillings to buy one.

As we were going up the street to a lady's house to tea (dear Missie they are not ashamed to ask us to tea). I am sure we have reason to be thankful.

When I read your letter I could not help crying to think of you lying awake half the night. I did not hear the steamer either. I wish I had not come in so soon but I dare say it is all for the best.

Will you please tell Mrs __ I am very sorry I did not see her before I came away, & would have been very glad to have spent a day with her, & will you please to give her my love too – and – I suppose will be married soon. As we came from the Railway Station, we drove up to Mr [Chase]'s[:] he came out, he has altered oh so much, looking so old, he shook hands with all of us, & said he would be very glad to see us. When I asked him how Miss C[hase] was, he asked me twice (I think he thought I said Mrs C[hase])[:] his son Charles came out too.

We are staying a little way out of the city, at an old lady's house. Mr M[enzies] took lodgings for us before we came. The old lady's name is Mrs __[:] she is so kind to us, her husband is in Adelaide, he could not get any employment here so he had to go away, she has 3 girls. I did not finish about the harmonium, as we were going to the lady's house to tea, a young man touched Mr H[agenauer]'s shoulder & gave him 1/2 a sovereign towards it.

We are going to the Manse on Wednesday afternoon to tea; & on Thursday we are going to the Cemetery to see poor Anna's & Carry's graves, & then to drink tea at Mr C[hase]'s & on Friday we are going away to Gippsland. After I had written the above, Mr Hagenauer has been here & we are to pack our boxes tonight to go tomorrow or Wednesday morning. We are going tomorrow to see Anna's & Carry's graves & then we are to go to tea at Mr C[hase]'s.

Perhaps I am going to stay in Melbourne with Mr H[agenauer] because he won't be able to go with us, as he has to go to Ballarat to a meeting, & he cannot get out of it: if the girls go they will be in charge of the Captain (who is a great friend of his) & he will put them at the

garden of the station, so that will be better than going in the coach (we were to go in that first).

Again I hope you are quite well. Please tell Miss __ that we thought of her on her birthday, & I hope she will have many many more, & we will think of dear Martie too, I hope he will have many more. I wish I had a likeness of you both, it would be so nice. All the girls are quite well & so are the babies, Nora is getting so fat, Emily says with her sea-sickness & she tells me to tell you that she calls it Monkey-Jack, she says with love & she sends many kisses to you & many shake hands to Martie & the same to __[.]

This afternoon we went to see the Governor lay the foundation of the Masonic Arms Hall: the band played beautifully[;] afterwards they sang "God Save the Queen".

I hope you will be able to make out my letter dear Missie.

The Harmonium is bought, dear Missie & going up tomorrow. Mr H[agenauer] says it is a beautifully toned one, it has 6 stops. Mrs __ will have such a lot to tell you, she says she thinks she will have to come up everyday to tell you something new.

Now I must conclude my dearest Missie, but will you please give my love to my poor dear Mother & Ada's too, & tell her we are all quite well & I hope her arm is getting better, I must not forget her. Give my love to dear __ and __ and all the children, tell them I hope they are all trying to be good to you, I do not forget Harry with the children. Accept my grateful love too dear Missie, and Martie & God bless you both is the prayer of your loving girl

B[essy]

*Bessy Flower, Port Adelaide, to Anne Camfield, Annesfield, Albany,
24 July, 1867³⁸⁷*

My dearest Missie,

We are not at home yet as you will see, but I thought you would like to know how we are, so I have written two or three lines. The steamer that we are in started from Melbourne on Tuesday evening at 9 o'clock in the evening.

We drank tea at Mr __'s & went away from there at 1/2 past six, but I shall leave all particulars for next month. Mrs __ will return today. Oh, how I wish I was coming too, but never mind I won't have very long to stay. Mr [Hagenauer] is so kind to us all. I wish you were here with us, but I must tell you we have been a week coming as far as we have; we stayed two days at Queenscliff & the Captain took me on shore. I went up the lighthouse, it was beautiful.

How are they all at home? Quite well I hope. We were at Queenscliff on dear ___ birthday; we thought of you all & wondered how you passed the day.

Give my best love to dear Miss ___ & Susan dear mother (and

Ada too) all the children, and tell Harry I hope he is a good boy.
Goodbye dearest more than mother, for the steamer goes now.

my love to ____
Your loving B[essy]

*Bessy Flower, Ramahyuck, to Anne Camfield, Annesfield, Albany,
August, 1867³⁸⁸*

My own dearest Missie,

I received your kind & welcome [letter] yesterday. Mr [Hagenauer] went to Stratford (a small township eight miles away) to get the letters, but on to Sale, so he was three days away. I was looking out so anxiously all the time. I had written & closed a letter before I received yours, so have sent one by Miss ____ to tell you that I have got yours.

I forgot to tell you a lot of things; first, I have had my plaid frock washed; only the skirt, for I wore it all the way from Melbourne & I am trying to sew it on again. I have begun school in great earnest; we sing, say a Catechism. Joseph, Harry & Albert write in copybooks & Theo (Mr H[agenauer]'s little boy) Alfred, Bert, Rosanna, Emily read & say the A.B.C; all that class are as big as Harriet; they are as quick in learning & mind me quickly. All of them call me Miss Flower because Mr H[agenauer] says they will show me more respect. And I hope dearest Missie I shall be able to keep it up & I will try. I have sent you dear Mr [Hagenauer]'s likeness & Captain's too, they were both very kind to us. Don't you think Mr [Hagenauer]'s like Mr ____ of Adelaide. Emily washes our clothes on Tuesdays. I am sure you must have been very glad to have the Bishop at home, I wish I were at home. Never mind I must work hard & then it will be all the sweeter when I come home to help you & be your right hand always. All the girls send their best love to you & a kiss. Charles & James are such good fellows & Rhoda & Nora love them very much. All the girls have new boots for Sunday. Mr [Hagenauer] bought them in Stratford.

Ada's ankles are so weak, so Mrs H[agenauer] thought cloth boots would be better for her. When the steamer was coming up the river this morning we were thinking if you & Martie were in it what would we do[.] Emily said, she would jump in & swim to it, I said I would give the girls a good thumping & Rhoda & Ada would get into the boat & row to meet you. Oh, if you did come Mr & Mrs H[agenauer] say they would be so delighted.

I have begun to knit this afternoon[;] we are going to have a sewing class every afternoon.

I must not forget to tell you I am making gruel for Mrs H[agenauer] every night, she says it is very nice[.] Emily is so wild here, will you dear Missie write & tell her she must not be so.

I am sorry about the ____ & hope he will soon be better. God bless you dear Missie & Martie. I hope you are quite well.

I am, your affectionate &
loving B[essy]

P. S. Please give a kiss to dear little Louisa & Jela

*Bessy Flower, Ramahyuck, to Anne Camfield, Annesfield, Albany,
August, 1867³⁸⁹*

My dearest Missie,

I am so glad you had a little taste of the wedding cake[.] Mr H[agenauer] was determined you should have some if it was ever so little.

The other day (Tuesday the 23rd) Mrs H[agenauer] & Miss L[ogin] went to Mr B[olden]'s (a station on Lake Wellington) & stayed until Wednesday; they went in the boat & left it at Mr B[olden]'s. After they had gone sometime two gentlemen came from Sale to cross the river, of course the boat was not there, so they had to walk to Greenwood, about 4 miles, & get a boat to come down; the funny part was they had come in a buggy & had sent it off before they had known that there was no boat; well they came up about 8 o'clock & had tea (I poured it out).

One of the gentleman knew me directly, he had seen me at Mr. Hagenauer & had come when the young ladies were playing & singing, he said; & I remembered directly, we had a game of chess & I beat him, I had to fight so hard though & was very glad you may be sure, dear Missie; his name is Mr ____[.]

Mr Hagenauer is a very good player, he has never been beaten once in this Colony; in Geelong he had a game with a Mr ____, & there was such a lot of people came to see it & he beat. I forget to ask how is dear Miss ____[?] I hope she is well, I mean not in pain,
August 9th

I have been looking out for the mail so anxiously these two or three days, but I was thinking that as it came in so early last month it will come in late.

August 16th

As I was teaching Theo & Cissie this afternoon Mrs Hagenauer came in & said they might go[;] they gazed at her in astonishment because we had been in only 1/2 an hour instead of an hour, then she threw me a letter & how I screamed with delight[.]

I did not know what had happened at home that I did not get a letter, for the steamer has been in sometime.

Oh what do you think dear Missie, I thought you were coming here, & I worked myself into such a state that I was continually looking out for you across the river, & at the gate to see if I could see a carriage & I looked into the newspapers to see the names of the passengers. I hope you wont laugh too much dear Missie, for I hope you will soon come & dear Martie too.

Will you please tell him that I am very thankful to him for writing, & will think & do as you would like me to do. Often & often my thoughts fly to dear Albany. I had a letter from dear _____. I did not expect one at all. I was sorry you did not write but will look forward for a long one next time.

I thank you dear Missie, for the magazine. I was so glad to get it too. I hope you like Mr M_____'s likeness. Mr H[agenauer] has put up two more cottages, since we have been here, works so hard & so does Mrs H[agenauer] but in a different way. She is going visiting at the end of the week & will be away 3 or 4 weeks so I will be left in charge of Theo & Cissie as they do not go only Ede & the baby. I shall try & have everything in nice order when she goes & comes back again home. Nobody spoke of my mother[.] I hope she is well[.] I was very pleased to get Harry's letter.

Nora & Rhoda are very happy. Last Sunday (I mean the 9th) Mrs H[agenauer] James, Charles & I, took the Sacrament in the evening at Church. On Friday we had a prayer meeting & they both of them prayed such beautiful prayers.

I am trying to be a comfort to Mrs H[agenauer][.] I dress the children & make their beds then it is breakfast time, we have prayers at the Church & then it is school time.

In the afternoon I have Theo & Cissie.

I have not begun regular school but tomorrow I think we will.

Mr H[agenauer] says when Mr B____ comes it will be better.

The children's names are Theophilus; but I have told you this before, I forgot.

Mr H[agenauer] says he is going to teach me to speak German & French; I am so glad.

While Mr ____ was here I used to play chess, & I beat him on Wednesday & Thursday he beat me every game; but I was so excited I did not know what I was doing: after he had done he asked me if my temper was all right because I told him I used to cry when I was beaten, & he laughed so.

In the morning he asked me how I was; but I am running on & forgetting that you have many more letters to write than to me.

I hope this won't tire you, & I divided this sheet that I could not go on any further. Will you please give my love to Mrs ____ and ___, I think I will write to Mrs _____ this time.

Mrs H[agenauer] is such a dear lady; I sleep in the nursery with the little children. There has been a young lady staying with us, her name is Miss L[ogin], a very nice lady. We dressed the church with green leaves, we got four round hoops & put wreaths round them, & put them in the middle of each side of the Church & leaves in the windows. It looked very pretty.

I am going to bed now, dear Missie, it is a quarter past nine. Mr & Mrs H[agenauer] are going to bed, so I must not sit up any longer.

Goodbye (dearest Missie & Martie) for the present; I hope you are quite well.

All the girls are going to write.

I am your affectionate

Grateful & loving

B[essy]

In April and May of 1874, Friedrich Hagenauer, the missionary at Ramahyuck, was accused in anonymous letters written to the *Argus* and the *Gippsland Times* of having neglected an Aboriginal man named Tarra Bobby. Hagenauer publicly refuted the accusations, claiming that the author of the letters was a local stock rider who wanted to drive the Aborigines away in order to get some of their land. Bessy lent her support to Hagenauer, writing to the Board in his defence.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Ramahyuck, to Robert Brough Smyth, Secretary, BPA, May, 1874*³⁹⁰

Sir

I have the honour to inclose the letter of B. Cameron, written in the name of the aborigines here at the station in reference to the unfounded accusations against the Blacks and myself...

*Bessy Cameron, Ramahyuck, to Robert Brough Smyth, Secretary, BPA, 4 May, 1874*³⁹¹

Sir

We the aborigines residing at this station have heard and read in the *Argus* and the *Gippsland Times*, that our kind friend and protector, the Revd. F.A. Hagenauer has been accused of unkindness and cruelty to the blind man Bobby, & also that he prevented us from giving food and shelter to him, which we beg to assure you, is an intolerable lie. We cannot suffer such accusation to pass, without stating to the Board of Protection, that we feel sorry such unfounded complaint, should have gone abroad, especially by such a man who did already everything to injure us, and tried to burn our fences and grass in the paddocks.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most humble servant

B. Cameron

in the name of the aborigines of Ramahyuck

Louisa Briggs

In January, 1881, Rev. Kramer, the missionary at Ebenezer, wrote to the Board that the Briggs family were indignant that he had not welcomed William Briggs back to the station with open arms, William having been absent from Ebenezer for nine months without permission. Kramer explained to Captain Page that he had told the Briggs that he would have nothing to do with William unless he

apologised for his absence, 'at which Mrs Briggs was very wroth, threatening to write to you'.³⁹²

Eda Brangy and Bella Lee

Eda Brangy gave evidence at the Royal Commission into the management of Coranderrk station in November 1881.

*Eda Brangy, Coranderrk, statement, 15 November, 1881*³⁹³

Sir, I am now about to bring my complaints before you. When we used to have our meals in the big room, we used to be locked up, and if we wanted anything it was given through the wires, just like we were prisoners. We never got any blankets since Mrs. Strickland has been on this station; the only two that got blankets were Bella Lee and Lizzie Edmonds; the blankets that I have got are from Mr. Green's and Mr. Halliday's time. Mrs. Strickland gave Tommy Dunolly a blanket, because his wife was ill, and said that Tommy Dunolly was to return it. And beside, Mrs. Strickland used our blankets on her own bed and on her daughters' beds too. And about the washing I used to do for Mrs. Strickland and receiving no wages for it: I once asked Mrs. Strickland why did not she pay me for washing for her. So she said that she was not going to pay us orphans. Bella Lee and Mary Ann are doing Mrs. Strickland's washing, and they don't receive any wages. Mr. Strickland came home from Healesville one afternoon, and what do you think we saw? A bottle in his pocket containing liquor, because we could smell it as soon as he came near to us. I got three witnesses – Tommy Dick, Alick Briggs, and Joseph Hunter. Mrs. Strickland is supposed to be the matron, but we find it very different indeed. Instead of Mrs. Strickland giving out the orders, the Miss Stricklands give out the orders. What we have to do? Mrs. Green never sends her daughters out to order us about like the Miss Stricklands do. When Mrs. Strickland is inside she would send out one of her daughters to watch us, like a cat watching for a mouse; not so with Mrs Green. I think we have reason to complain about the treatment we get here. And when we are out of bread we are obliged to send up to Tommy Dunolly, and beside bake damper; and beside Mrs. Strickland keeps back some of the loafs until the baker came, and then she would give us the stale loafs, and take a new loaf for her table. And, again, Mrs. Strickland never come into our bedrooms to see if they are all right; but if she knew that any visitors were coming up to see this station, she would be on the look-out to see that all was clean, and also the big room, and the little children would be made to put on their best dresses; but if anybody didn't come, there would be the difference. The only food we get for breakfast is bread and treacle and sometimes steak. Not so with Mrs. Green; we would get everything we wanted. There were two men here, named Mr Wilkie and Major Bell. They used to eat the Government rations, and also the Miss Stricklands used to send down milk every morning, and that is the reason that sometimes we used to get short of bread. But if Mrs.

Green was back we would be satisfied. Miss Strickland teaches the boys in Sunday school. When they were reading, Miss Strickland says to David Banfield, 'You and your father are leading the people astray, instead of telling them of God.'

Sir, I am yours truly, Eda Brangy

The following year, Eda Brangy and Bella Lee became the central figures in another inquiry concerning Coranderrk. In June 1882 the BPA inquired into the circumstances surrounding Bella's giving birth to a still-born baby.³⁹⁴ Bella was sixteen and had been in the service of the manager's household for three years. In 1881 she became pregnant but did not tell anyone until she suffered pains. The inquiry focused on the treatment Bella received from Mrs Strickland, the manager's wife. Bella and Eda (who worked in the Stricklands' kitchen) informed Mrs Bon, a member of the Board, that Mrs Strickland had given Bella certain medicines before the still-birth. Another letter signed by several Aborigines including Bella was sent to the local Constable. The letters suggested that Mrs Strickland had deliberately given Bella medicine to kill the baby. As a result of the controversy Rev. Strickland resigned as manager of the station.

Bella Lee, Coranderrk, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 3 June, 1882

My Dear Friend,

I now write to you all about what Mrs Strickland has given me. She gave me six kinds of different medicine; the names are accomtum, champhor, ubtilla, china, codliver-oil, castor-oil, and when I was taken ill nobody stay with me but Eda stay up until I felt lest pain and Mrs Strickland came to see me only once through the whole night and she did not want anybody to know anything about it, she [?] told Eda not to tell anybody[;] when Ellen Richards & Mrs Briggs came in to see me she did not seem to like them coming & see me[;] she thought they might say something to me about her[;] one thing I know[:] that these medicines has done one great deal of arm because I never felt well since she gave me these medicines, and while I was taking these medicine my eye's were very yellow[,] my face was always full of pimples and my body and red streaks; as the somebody scratched me[;] soon after I was confined I asked for water and I did not know anything about so miss A. Strickland gave it to me[.] I don't think I have any more to say to you so now I conclude with best love to you.

I forgot salts which Mrs Strickland gave me before I was confined.

Yours faithfully
Bella Lee.

Eda Brangy, Coranderrk, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 3 June, 1882

My dear Friend,

I now write these few lines to you about the case of Bella Lee[.] Before Mrs Strickland went to Melbourne Bella fell ill, and Mrs Strickland gave her some medicine for her cold for she had a very bad cold at the time. After Mrs Strickland as been away for a fortnight Bella felt worse and Miss A Strickland gave her some more medicine to bring on the monthly causes and when she could not succeed in bringing on the cause, Miss Strickland send for her Mother and as soon as her mother came home she when strait in Bella Lee's room and gave her all kind of medicine[;] the first is acctum, champhor, pilstalla, china, codliver-oil, castor-oil, salts, And when I ask Miss A Strickland what was the matter with Bella she said something very funny[.] After Bella as taken all these medicine she was covered with pimples all over her body, and her face was streakes with red marks as if she was scolded with hot water. And on the Monday morning Bella felt ill; and on toward the evening she got worse. I went in and told Mrs Strickland that Bella was worse and she came in; and the first thing she said to poor Bella Lee was sure your sin will find you and when she was in great pain. And after Bella was confined Mrs Strickland told me to give Bella everything cold and nothing hot. I did not give her anything[.] I left it all to Mrs Strickland[.] And after Bella was confined Mrs Strickland told me not to tell anybody that Bella was confined[.] But I went up to Dunnollys' and told it out. When the baby was borne it was quite blue as if it was bruise. I must conclude

I am yours Truly
Miss Eda Brangey

Bella Lee, Coranderrk, statement, June, 1882

[Eda] asked me to write a letter for Mr Dean stating what medicines Mrs Strickland had given me to cause the death of my child. I refused to do so because Mrs Strickland was always very kind to me. She told me Tommy Dunnolly wanted me to write it I refused to do so. She came to me again the same day and said if I wrote it Tommy Dunnolly would be my best friend. I then wrote this letter.

Eda Brangy, Coranderrk, statement, June, 1882

I went to Bella and asked her to write a letter about the medicine she had been taking because people up the street on the Station said the medicine she had been taking was enough to kill her. She consented to write it I wrote one letter and Bella wrote another. I told her that Tommy Dunnolly wants her to write it and that Mrs Bon wanted to see the medicines she had been taking...I never said to anybody that Mrs Strickland had done anything to harm Bella or had given her the medicines for any other purpose than to do her good.

Bella Lee, Coranderrk, to Mrs Strickland, 14 June, 1882

My Dear Friend

I now take the pleasure of writing these few lines to you hoping they may find you all in good health and strength as it leaves us at present. Dear Mrs Strickland I am quite well at present[.] I do miss you[;] now the place looks quite empty and lonely[;] we have prayers a little earlier because Mr Goodall gets tired of running about so through the day. Me Maggie & Eda & Sissy[?][;] we went out for a long walk on Friday & Saturday & Sunday & Lizzie is also writing a piece of note to Miss Nettie[.] I have heard two persons asking one of the house girls what things you took away that belong to the station and when the last pack went away I was noticing some person looking in the Van so eagerly and I was told by a white person that the Sunday before you went away you kept me home on purpose to ask me some question but I told this person that you did not ask me any question but that I was sleeping almost the whole afternoon[.] And this person has told Mr Goodall that I was used shamefully by the Stricklands, I don't think I have any more to say so now I must conclude for the present time[;] so goodbye all.

William Paton investigated the case and came to the conclusion that 'it was evident to me that an attempt had been made to circulate a most malicious and untruthful report, with the intention of inferring the wife of the superintendent'. He claimed that Bella had been persuaded by Eda Brangy to write a letter to Mrs Bon of the BPA 'upon promise of good friendship of Tommy Dunolly'. He went on to report that Bella 'is now sorry she wrote this letter and declares that Mrs Strickland was always very kind to her, and, she believes, did her best for her during her illness'.³⁹⁵

At the end of 1882, Bella Lee married Spider, a Queensland Aborigine who had come to live at Coranderrk in 1880.³⁹⁶ A year later, in January 1884, she aided Jennie Rowan and Annie Manton in their complaints about the new manager Mr Goodall by writing statements on their behalf. In 1883 Bella gave birth to a daughter Catherine; both she and her baby died in 1885.

Eda Brangy remained at Coranderrk until the 1890s when she left for New South Wales.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Ada [Eda] Brangy, Warangesda, NSW, 12 April, 1894*³⁹⁷

My dear friend

I was sorry to hear from the Railway Department that you could not travel alone and that you wanted another pass for two from Albury to Corranderrk, but as passes are so very difficult to obtain, I have decided to meet you at Albury and to bring you to Corranderrk myself; so that there will be no other difficulty in future. I shall arrive

at Albury, on the 25th inst by the Sydney Express in the evening, but if that is too soon I will come a week later if you let me know, but I think that [?] days will be time enough. You would have to be at Albury on the same day as I come and meet me on arrival of train from Melbourne.

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

Gen Insp of Aborigines

Caroline Morgan

In November 1881 Caroline gave evidence at a Royal Commission inquiry into the management of Coranderrk station.

*Caroline Morgan, Coranderrk, statement, 16 November, 1881*³⁹⁸

This is my evidence. Coranderrk, November 16th 1881. I have asked Mrs. Strickland for a pair of blankets for my sick boy. She told me that she must write to Captain Page first. Then I told her, must my little boy be perishing with the cold till you get a letter from Mr. Captain Page? She told me she had orders only to give a pair of blankets for every hut. Then I told her, what must I do then, I have three beds? Then she told me that she did not know. I then told her that we always get blankets for the children before she came here. Another time I asked her for three pannicans. She also said that Captain Page never gave her orders to give them out to the huts. I told her that we got knives and forks and pannicans before she came here. She said she would write to Captain Page about these things; but I never heard nothing more about them since until I saw one of Annie Hamilton's girls coming up with a pannican from Mrs. Strickland. So I went down and asked her if there were any pannicans came lately. She never said yes or no, but just turned around and said, "How many do you want"? I said, "Three, if you please." So she gave them to me, so I thanked her for them, and then I came away home. My husband also asked Mr. Strickland for a pair of boots for my poor sick boy, Marcus, and Mr. Strickland said there was none; so he said he would send in for a pair to Healesville; so he sent in for a pair and I got them. So when pay-day came, Mr. Strickland took 10s. of my husband's wages to pay for the boots. We thought that Mr. Captain Page was to stand responsible for those boots, but it seems we had to pay for them. When my poor sick boy was very bad he was longing for eggs; so my husband tried in the neighbourhood and could not get any; so my sick boy was dying. He asked Mr. Strickland to send to Mr. Captain Page for some eggs; so Mr. Strickland said he would see. So when Mr. Strickland came up and visited him, the sick boy asked him again about the eggs, and Mr. Strickland said, "Well, my boy, if I send to Captain Page he would laugh at me for the idea of sending for eggs to town from up country." So I told Mr. Strickland that my husband tried round about the neighbourhood for some eggs and could not get any. Milk I get very

little; I get from half of a cup to a cupfull – never more than. So anything we ask for we get very little of it. Caroline Morgan. +

In September 1883, Caroline returned to Coranderrk after receiving treatment in hospital for a bad leg.

*Caroline Morgan, Coranderrk, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
11 September, 1883*³⁹⁹

Dear Sir

I will write your these few lines to tell...yourself what was happened that their was no buggy send for me to Lilydale to meet me & I didnt know what to do only for the kind gentlemen that seen me trying my best to get up to the hotel[;] that was Mr Newmen & I asked him was their any of my friends on the road coming[;] he didnt meet any of my friend & he said no & I begged him to take me home in the coach & when I did get to cutting there was nobody who meet me their either & I was waiting at the cutting for hour & a half & I at to send a little boy from the cutting to bring me a horse & dray to take me home & when I did get home I found that their was no place for me to go in & my old house was knock down & I didnt know what to do[;]...Mr Goodall never come to tell me where was I to go to stop in[;] he never come to see me whether I came home after till I at to send for him & that was on Monday morning & then I asked him if your have written to him & he said that your didnt write to him before about me to tell him that I was comming home till the very last day & he sifted johnny Charles into the new building...if your didnt want me to live in the building your might have told me & let my Old place stop where it is & I think it is very hard indeed & I am not...right yet over it[.] I would talk to your better if your was here so I must only make a camp in my garden & I think it was very unkind to do that to me & I am sure that I have told you a week before I came out & I didnt came out of the hospital with my own will but the will of the doctor & I can help it that I must report it

thus all I
have to say to
you just now

I remain your
truly friend

Caroline Morgan

*William Goodall, manager, Coranderrk, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
14 September, 1883*⁴⁰⁰

....I was unable to go and meet Mrs Morgan according to your request as my horses were on an island on the Banks of the Yarra surrounded by the flood waters and I was unable to go by the coach as there was no coach to Lilydale that morning the mail being carried on horse-back.

Her statement that there was no conveyance to meet her when the coach arrived is a gross exaggeration. I gave instructions for a horse and cart to be sent for her at nine o'clock but owing to some difficulty in finding one readily she had to wait some ten minutes or a quarter of an hour for it but there were several there to meet her and inform her that the cart was coming.

I did not go to see her on her arrival because I was very busy at the time a large amount of work devolving upon me now which was at one time attended to by Harris and further there was no necessity for it as Miss Persse is never behind-hand at such times and who most willingly and assiduously does all she can for the assistance and comfort for any who are sick or afflicted. She has therefore no room to complain of neglect.

Her statement is equally untrue that she had no place to go to when she came home[.] I had a room for her in one of the new cottages where she would have been carefully attended to by Mrs Parker while her children were being taken care of by Mrs Davis in the house formerly occupied by the Charleses. Mrs Davis has had charge of the children since the sad accident and they have been much better taken care of and kept a deal cleaner than when their mother had charge of them. However these arrangements do not appear to please her although they are the best I can make for her: hence all the long list of complaints with which you have been favored.

The following month Mr Goodall addressed further complaints made by Caroline Morgan.

*William Goodall, manager, Coranderrk, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
19 October, 1883⁴⁰¹*

...Her statement that I turned her out at Lithgow's and told her to find her own way to the station is equally a base falsehood. I drove into Lithgow's yard because it was too early to go to the train and I intended to ask Mr Lithgow to take her down as he did on the previous occasion but she went off and when Mr Lithgow told her to wait a little and he would send her down: she informed him she could get down very well herself. I also saw her going myself and told her if she had waited I would have sent her down but she replied "Never mind I can get along nicely myself".

I cannot understand her reasons for such lying misrepresentation. I have been kind and attentive to her ever since she met with her misfortune. I know I offended her yesterday when I took her sharply to task for saying that both you and I had been very neglectful of her and didnt care anything about her well-being simply because the railway pass didnt come to hand the minute she expected it.

If there is much more of this sort of thing I will resign the management of the station as I find it almost impossible to live in such an element of base falsehood and misrepresentation. I have more than I

can properly attend to at present without having my time taken up with replying to often lies of this kind.

In March 1885 Caroline left Coranderrk to go to Maloga. Her husband Alfred was in prison at this time.

A. Alleck[?] on behalf of Caroline Morgan, Maloga, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 25 March, 1885⁴⁰²

Sir, Mrs Morgan arrived here safely & quite well. Children all well

I suppose you have heard that her husband got _____ trouble and was taken to prison where he is undergoing a sentence of twelve months, more than half of which he has done now.

She wishes me to say she does not regret the day she came here for she has learned to know more about the Friend that _____ a brother and that when all _____ friends leave us there is one who takes us up, ever the Lord God Almighty.

The children are all getting on nicely at school. The twins are growing big and strong[.] Mrs Morgan wishes me to tell you that she sees how wicked she was to talk to you as she did, And she wants you to forgive her

Hoping you are well I remain yours truly

[?]. A. Alleck[?]

for Mrs Morgan

Jennie Rowan

William Goodall, manager, Coranderrk, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 23 July, 1883⁴⁰³

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Jenny Rowan has left here with the intention of going to Melbourne without my permission. I told her that if she did so she would have to buy her own expenses and also her board & lodging while in town. I do not see the necessity of her going so often to Melbourne. She was down about a fortnight ago.

William Goodall, manager, Coranderrk, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA, 12 December, 1883⁴⁰⁴

Annie Manton & Jennie Rowan left here without permission and I believe have gone to Melbourne. Please do not issue passes for their return as this is the second time during the last fortnight they have done the same thing.

In January 1884 Jennie Rowan and Annie Manton made complaints to the BPA about Mr Goodall and his management of Coranderrk.⁴⁰⁵ Mrs Bon, a member of the Board, and Dr Embling JP sent a document containing questions about Mr Goodall's management to Mr Green, a former manager of Coranderrk, who then gave the document to

Jennie's husband Sam Rowan. Annie and Jennie answered the questions and sent them back to Mr Green who passed them on to Bon and Embling. Dr Embling then drew up an indictment on behalf of the two women. The original questions are not in the archives, but the replies of Annie Manton and Jennie Rowan are there. Their statements were written on their behalf by Bella Lee.

Jennie Rowan, Coranderrk, statement, January, 1884

Jeannie Rowan complains

1. That Mr Goodall during the Racing Week took all the men down to Melbourne except for a few who would not go because they had not been allowed to go shearing that they had to walk to & from Lilydale that Mr Goodall did not look after the men as he should have done and subsequently some of the men got drunk that the natives complained that they had to find their own way home.
2. Of Mr Goodall's utter want of sympathy when they are in trouble with their husbands.
3. That she attended a woman in labor & instead of getting £1/1 which she should get Mr Goodall only gave her £1.
4. That Mr Goodall has caused a feeling of animosity to grow up between the half castes & the Blacks and he always takes the part of the half castes.
5. That she doesn't like going to Mr Page as he has never forgiven her giving up the letter about the 'Persian Cord dress' which he wrote to her.⁴⁰⁶
6. That Mr Goodall called her 'a nasty beastly brute'
7. That the half castes get nice new cottages although they have no right to them.
8. That the Blacks & half castes are kept unfriendly with one another.

Annie Manton, Coranderrk, statement, January, 1884

Annie Manton complains

1. That she has been ill with [?] has been operated on & is about to go under an operation again that she should have the charge of her daughter [Mary Ann] who is now working for the Matron.
2. That Dick Rowan wants to marry her daughter and she (Mrs R.) objects but Mr Goodall said he would marry them in spite of her.
3. That she went for her child as she felt it was not being looked after & Mr Goodall sent her away.
4. That she had no rations for 20 days.
5. Annie wants to know if Mr Goodall is right in giving Government rations to Cricketers from all parts of the country.
6. The Blacks [this sentence was not completed]

On 8 January the BPA met to investigate the charges made by Annie Manton and Jennie Rowan. William Goodall made a statement denying

the women's charges and the Board took evidence from five of the Coranderrk men who happened to be in Melbourne on their way to Geelong to play a cricket match. The men supported Goodall.⁴⁰⁷

*Joseph Shaw, head teacher, Coranderrk, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
12 January, 1884*

Sir,

I have the honor to state for your information that a document has been sent here to Annie Manton and Jennie Rowan containing 16 or 18 questions involving charges against the management and treatment of this place.

The document is not signed but it is stated at the heading that the information is required for the Chief Secretary. Most of the questions and charges have been most ingeniously prepared and, from a one sided view, are calculated to have a most damaging effect. I need hardly say that every question or charge has been answered in the affirmative.

Another document (a petition of some kind) I believe, leaves here with the one referred to above. I have not, however, been able to get to see the latter, but it has been signed, I understand, by a great many and to my surprise by one or two that I thought were really staunch supporters of Mr Goodall.

The former document refers to yourself in one or two places but chiefly to Mr Goodall, and is a kind of "set off" against your inquiring the other day.

It would, however, cover sheets of foolscap to relate all that is referred to. I have good reason for suspecting that the document has been prepared and sent here by one of two persons whom I need not name and who took good care that it did not come in Coranderrk mail bag. I should have written you by today's post but I wanted to get some information about the petition. I would write Mr Goodall but I do not know where a letter would find him.

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your obedient Servant

Joseph Shaw

*Mr Goodall, manager, Coranderrk, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
21 January, 1884*

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that I have been unable to elicit any further information regarding the questions which were forwarded to the station for signature but Mr Shaw very cleverly obtained a lot of information which he communicated to Dr Morrison from whom I anticipate you will shortly hear all. As far as I can learn he was well pleased with all he saw. The Dr has gone on to Marysville and will return to-day. I have just received a letter from him requesting me to

meet upon the arrival of the coach from Marysville as he is desirous of having a little conversation with me before returning to Melbourne. A number of the aborigines are highly displeased at the action taken by Mrs Bon and Dr Embling and intend to draw up a protest against the same and forward it to you[.] I will hurry the matter on as much as I can.

Thomas Dunolly and co, Coranderrk, to the BPA, 21 January, 1884

Gentlemen,

We the undersigned Aborigines respectfully wish to utter our protest against the action taken by the two women Jennie Rowan and Annie Manton in stating that during our recent visit to the agricultral show we were neglected by our Superintendent and also making further complaints against him. We beg most emphatically to state that the charges are groundless and that during the said visit the greatest care and interest was taken in our comfort and entertainment. Ever since Mr Goodall has managed this station our condition has been considerably improved[;] we are better cared for in every respect and we were never happier or better looked after[.] We do not wish any alterations made and when we have any complaints to make we feel that we are quite capable of doing them ourselves and we do not wish Mrs Bon or Dr Embling or any one else to make them for us or in any way interfere with our Manager or his management[;] we beg to subscribe ourselves

Your most obedient servants

X Thos Dunolly
Robert Wandon
X John Charles
X W Parker
X Alick Campbell X
Leonard Kerr X
X Dick Rowan
Alfred Davis
X H. Nelson
X Spider
Thomas Dick
X Jessie Dunolly
X Lizzie Davis
X Margaret Kerr
X Lizzie Charles
X Mrs BriggsX
X Ann BriggsX
X Mrs Campbell X
X Jenny Patterson
X John Patterson
X Louisa Hunter
Thos Gib__

X Edith Brangy
X Mary Ann McLellan
X Minnie Lee
X Alick Briggs
X Willie Edmont
X Johnny X Terrik
P X Terrick

[Written on the above letter was the following note by Francis Hare, dated 31 January, 1884:]

On visiting the station today Mr Goodall handed me this memorial and requested me to see the persons who signed it[;] many of them were absent from the station but those present I called into the office (who have X opposite their names) and read over the document to them, they all stated they fully understood what they had signed & also stated that they were perfectly satisfied with the management[.] The memorial was written by Thos Dunolly & he obtained the signatures to it.

Dr Alex Morrison, a member of the Board, visited Coranderrk in late January to review the workings of the mission. He specifically looked into the recent complaints made of Mr Goodall.

*Dr Alex Morrison, BPA, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
28 January, 1884*

I here saw Mary Ann the half caste girl about whom so much has been said and written. She seemed to me a superior intelligent girl, quite happy and contented in her present position and when I asked her if she would like to go to live with her mother, she most strongly protested her repugnance to such a proposal, Miss Persse gives her the highest character for truthfulness obedience and industry....

In the course of my investigation I heard rumours of a document that had been sent to the Blacks by some anonymous writer...The document, which bore no signation, was in the form of questions insinuating complaints and charges against the superintendent. Sam Rowan told me that Dr Embling had written the questions for them, gave them to Mrs Bon, and Mrs Bon sent them to Mr Green, a former superintendent now resident at Healesville and Mr Green then gave them to him (Rowan) with instructions what to do. Jennie Rowan wife of the above corroborated this statement [?] the document then was sent to Mr Green in a stamped envelope addressed to Dr Embling. I also found that Annie Manton, Jennie Rowan and Tom Bamfield (Punch) were in the habit of going to Dr Embling and Mrs Bon, with every little complaint, and boasted that they were encouraged to do so. These three natives had all been in Town for a day or two just before the document was sent up. Rowan got the document from Mr Green on the 11th inst,

and sent it back to Dr Embling next day, with all the questions answered, and some complaints were added by Mrs Nelson and one or two others. Bella Lee, a half caste woman, wrote the replies for Jennie Rowan and Annie Manton. I investigated carefully all the charges made against Mr Goodall by the two or three discontents, and I found them of such a frivolous description that I am amazed that they would be for a moment listened to and the general impression left on my mind was that the aborigines were pampered, and that too much was done for them, so much so in fact, as to destroy all self reliance and necessity for exertion. With the exception of the few discontents rendered so by outside influence all spoke in praise of Mr Goodall, and expressed dissatisfaction with those who were stirring up discontent....I regret that Mr Goodall was necessarily absent as I heard chiefly one side of the story but from all I heard I am led to the conclusion that, he is a thoroughly efficient manager, and does all in his power for the good of those under his charge. It is manifest however, that this outside interference must be stopped. What department would stand it? Here we have charges formulated in Melbourne, transmitted to an agent in the vicinity of the Station, handed by him to the Blacks, sent back in an addressed envelope, and this without the knowledge of any of the authorities on the station. I forbear[?] to characterize such action. I should perhaps mention that on my return from Coranderrk I had an interview with Mr Green, who corroborated the statement with reference to the document made by the blacks. It is my intention to revisit the station on an early date, so as to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the inmates and the working of the place.

Morrison presented a report of his investigations at a meeting of the Board in February 1884. The Board decided that the charges made by Jennie Rowan and Annie Manton were groundless.⁴⁰⁸

Several years later, in March 1889, Jennie Rowan complained about Joseph Shaw, now manager of Coranderrk. A committee of the BPA investigated and 'entirely exonerated' Shaw, deciding there was no ground for complaint.⁴⁰⁹ Three years later, in July 1892, Jennie Rowan and Mrs Donolly travelled to the BPA office in Melbourne to make a complaint on behalf of Coranderrk residents about Mr Shaw's management. Again the complaint was dismissed by the BPA as unfounded.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to the Rowans, Coranderrk,
13 July, 1892⁴¹⁰*

The Aborigines

Sam and Mrs Rowan etc

I have the honour to inform you that due inquiry has been made regarding your complaint made personally here in this Office and in writing that you did not receive sufficient bread from Mr. Shaw, the manager, and likewise, that the State School Teacher, Mr. J. Edwards had been instructed by one of the boys etc.

I regret very much that you should have made such requests and complaints, for it has been clearly proved that you did receive the full amount of bread granted lawfully under the Boards Regulations and in addition to the Bread you obtained flour, rice oatmeal etc[.] Of course, you can have the usual allowance of flour instead of bread, if you arrange it first with Mr. Shaw, but the allowance must be strictly according to law.

Regarding your statement made here in the Office regarding the insulting behaviour of a boy towards the teacher, I have received a letter from that gentleman, stating that this is not true.

Now my dear friends let me assure you, that the Board and myself will always be glad to help you when you are in trouble, you should consider[?] that it is very wrong to have acted as you did and that [?] of the Act of Parliament is quite clear, how such acts[?], [?] of the Regulations, and false statements against the Officers of the Board have to be visited with due penalties.

I trust that you apologise to Mr. Shaw and that we hear no more unfounded complaints on such matters.

With best wishes

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs J. Rowan, Maloga,
20 July, 1894⁴¹¹*

Dear Mrs Rowan

Your letter of the 13th inst has duly come to hand and I thank you for all the information you gave me in regard to the travelling to Maloga. I regret, however, to state that I have for some time to come to visit other localities and are not able to come up into your neighbourhood. When I can come I will let you know of before the time.

With best wishes

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

Emily Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Ramahyuck, to the Premier of Victoria,
11 November, 1896⁴¹²*

Dear Sir

Please excuse the liberty we have taken in addressing you. Wishing to avoid a misunderstanding. We having heard that Mrs MacCreddie had written to you (being advised by Mr Kelly of Stratford) complaining of our Manager Revnd F. A. Hagenauer Insp. Gen. of Abgs. Mr Hagenauer having had reason to reprove her son, told him to go to a Mr Bowman to wool wind as Mr Bowman needed someone. Mr Hagenauer gave Mrs MacCreddie Mr Bowman's letter to read, she told

Mr Hagenauer that her son never did that sort of work before[.] Mr Hagenauer said that he should go & leave as he would not employ him around the place anymore[;] with that she turned round on Mr Hagenauer & abused him[;] he told her to go as she was a dirty woman, this is an example of her abuse; she called him a stinking bald headed old fellow, a dirty man & he had a lot of dirt in his family, that in his presence & in the hearing of young people he was no more a Christian than her backside, such language is intolerable to the Manager to say what she did say she had no business whatever....The rules of the station are carried out conscientiously & kindly (I must personally say)[.] Mr Hagenauer is too lenient & too kind[;] he would never wilfully injure or hurt anyone's feelings, there are times if he would act according to what some deserve they would be dismissed at once. Both Mr & Mrs Hagenauer love us all & have only our welfare & good at heart[.] Only those that are ungrateful think otherwise & make complaints against them....Mr & Mrs Hagenauer have been amongst the natives over 30 years & have never had such abuse as she gave them[.] Mr Hagenauer does not know that we have written to you[;] we thought it only fair that [you] should know the character of the woman for she has received nothing but kindness from Mr & Mrs Hagenauer[.] At present the men are all mostly away shearing, knowing that their signatures would gladly be given, apoligising once more for the liberty of writing to you[;] remain yours respectfully

in the name of all the station

Emily Milton Stephen

Maggie Mobourne

On 24 February, 1900 Rev. Stähle, the missionary at Lake Condah, wrote to Hagenauer asking that Maggie and Ernest Mobourne be moved to another station because he was concerned that Ernest was encouraging others on the station to be insubordinate. According to Stähle: '[w]hat they want is to do as they like & as by the Board's latest decision they cannot roam about as they like, their plan is to get as unruly & defiant as possible so as to have their rations stopped & then[?] get a chance of roaming in defiance of law & order.'⁴¹³

*Maggie Mobourne, Lake Condah, to the Editor of the Hamilton Spectator, Hamilton, February, 1900*⁴¹⁴

Sir

Kindly allow me space of one of one of your columns to bring before you and the public the manner in which Mr Stahle threatened me on the 19th because my little children were absent from prayers. When told by me to speak to the other half of the people who were absent as well as my husband and children and to his own he told me to shut up and I will pick on you and do something to you and your children. When asked by my father next day he denied saying it and told the biggest lies as was spoken from his own lips that I am quite

ashamed to see him handle the Bible and teach us as if he were an earnest Christian gentleman as some of you take him to be. He doesn't practice what he preaches as one sees who knows him every day that passes. He's not a fit man for the position he holds but is dragging us down into hell rather than helping us rise. What I say here is true and I can take a solemn oath before God and before any christian people as I have proofs for his falsehoods. If any of you would only know the true state of affairs you would be amazed to see how we put up with his treacherous ways and that he is alive to this day. We who know his ways often wonder he is not punished by the Master he professes to serve – Hoping sooner or later things will be altered.

I remain

Yours faithfully

Maggie Mobourne

*Maggie Mobourne, Lake Condah, to D. N. McLeod, Vice Chairman, BPA,
27 February, 1900⁴¹⁵*

Sir

Having returned in September with the object of endeavouring to live in peace and in accordance with the rules of the Station, I am sorry to inform you that Mr Stahle seems to take every opportunity to find some fault with us, and it seems as if our efforts to live peaceably are of no use here because Mr Stahle seems determined to annoy us and to take every opportunity of reporting us to the Board for insubordination.

On the 19th inst. Mr. Stahle spoke in a threatening manner to me and he is a liar and has always been (see full particulars in another letter) and he doesn't treat us justly. I would ask you, to get up an impartial Board of inquiry to investigate and see fairness and justice.

I am prepared to substantiate my statements to be true and also can get the majority here as witnesses to prove that we have been living peacefully.

I am

Sir

Yours respectfully

Maggie Mobourne

(we the following corroborate the statements given above)

Signatures

Ernest Mobourn

Robert Turner X

Thomas Willes X

James Cortwine X

Jenny Green X

Albert White

Fred Carmichael

Louisa White X

Edward Cortwine

Isaac McDuff X
Bella Mobourn

While the Board considered Maggie's complaint, Rev. Stähle told the Board that he would give the Mobournes rations on the condition that Ernest come and get them himself.

*Rev. Stähle, Lake Condah, to Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
3 March, 1900⁴¹⁶*

....After a while he returned & told me that his wife would not accept any rations & that consequently he would have to do the same & that they would prefer to starve. A little starvation might be a good thing for them, only I am sorry the rest of the people would not let it come to that, and even the rabbits are against this resolution, for as long as they are so plentiful no black or white man will starve in this district.

*Rev. Stähle, Lake Condah, to Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
13 March, 1900⁴¹⁷*

Maggie Mobourne and Bella Mobourne evidently think that if they cause the disturbance nothing can be done to them or their husbands. Still E. Mobourne who is a real 'bush lawyer' works the whole thing. Pray for me to act justly & wisely, especially during this time of trial.

In 1900 the Board obtained an Order-in-Council for the removal of the Mobourne family to Lake Tyers. It seems the Order-in-Council was cancelled about 1903 and the Mobournes were allowed to return to Lake Condah.

*Maggie Mobourne, Lake Condah, to Rev. Stähle, Lake Condah,
12 August, 1912⁴¹⁸*

Mr Stahle

Dear Sir

As you have been so kind to point out to Ernest the error I have made in coming to the Mission House, in the manner I did, when I wanted to go and see Mrs. Stahle and tell her my troubles about Miss Bagnall, last Tuesday, and that you wanted me to apologise, I do, because at the time I could not control my feelings as I was hurt very much indeed at Miss Bagnall's remarks which was this, "You're a vile creature"[.] "Thank God I haven't got what you got in your arms"[.]

When she finished I said, I know I am vile, but I never thought it was in you to speak as you have just spoken, I took you to be a lady, a Christian, and my friend.

No more was said between us, the Almighty being my witness as well as my sister.

Yours respectfully

Maggie Mobourne

Mary McRae

*Mary McRae, Coranderrk to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
16 December, 1913⁴¹⁹*

Dear Mr Ditchburn,

I now take up my pen to write you these few lines to let you know we are in a little trouble as on Friday Mr Robart took us all to the picnic at Mordialloc and Alex upset Mr Robarts for the day. I was vexed myself because Alex got drinking with some of the white men at Mordialloc[;] Mr Robart cautioned us all that we were not to come to town on account of the men making fools of themselves[;] he was right in that way[.] I know that my husband is passionate & very defying Mr Ditchburn but its that cursed drink that makes Alex stubborn[;] he is good all through as I told you when I was at your office[.] Dear Mr Ditchburn Mr Robart said he has reported Alex already so I asked him did he report about anything else that he knows of about people coming here every week white & black[;] he quickly reports about my husband drinking and here is too young lads who are very determined runs into Healesville without Mr Robart knowing it[;] when he does hear he doesnt do anything[.] Alex had his sugar stopped for his last drinking & he still has it stopped[.] Mr Ditchburn I am almost starving[;] it seems I and my children short[.] Mr Ditchburn Mr Robart was talking about an Ordering Council for Alex[;] he says he has put the whole matter in the hands of the Board to settle[;] would you kindly let me know[.] I do not want my husband nor myself to move. Dear Mr Ditchburn you know the result[;] this is everything about Alex[;] I told Mr Robart I was going to tell you about Alex[;] he said there is no need but I cant rest[;] hoping & trusting you will receive this letter[.] Alex is expecting his punishment from the Board[;] hoping he wont be moved from here[;] Dear Mr Ditchburn

I will close

I am your Obedient Servant

Mary E McRae

I have a feeling for my husband Mr Ditchburn

Mr Ditchburn referred the matter to Mr Robarts for comment. Robarts replied that Alex McRae had on many occasions disregarded his authority and was determined to drink. He did not think stopping Alex's sugar supply would cause his wife and children to starve. 'Mary has on several occasions asked me to report her husband's drinking habit and abuse, but I always try repeated persuasions and give every man and boy every chance before they are reported.' Robarts suggested that an Order-in-Council be issued to stop Alex from leaving the station. The Board sent Alex McRae a warning that if he continued to misbehave he would be severely dealt with.

In March 1914 Robarts wrote to the Board suggesting that Mary McRae be removed to another station because she was 'misconducting herself'. He did not give details, except that she was 'always wanting to run about, which tends to draw others out as well, including her husband'. He also thought it would be best to remove Alex. The BPA sent the McRaes to Lake Condah.

*Mary McRae, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
19 May, 1914⁴²⁰*

Dear Mr Ditchburn

I now take the greatest pleasure in writing you these few lines hoping it will find you keeping well as it leaves both Alex myself & children the same at present[;] well Mr Ditchburn it was a sneaking way Mr Robart did by reporting about me although I am not afraid to own up to what was done[;] the reason I did things was because Robart always listened to his favourite Jimima[;] its the honest truth[;] he takes her word before any one else[;] I am sorry for what has been done & another thing Mr Robart would not keep Jimima's sons off the station because he was in favour of Jimima Dunolly[;] you are my best friend & Im telling you what I think[.] I like being here Mr Ditchburn but I wouldnt like to live here altogether...I hope we are here only for a while[;] it seemed to me as if Robart only wanted to shift us so he could please Jimima Dunolly by letting her children visit the station[;] you dont know what is going on over at Coranderrk[;] the young girls run about everywhere & since Fannie McDougall came to Coranderrk she got into Ivy Dunolly's company and goes any where[.] Ivy Dunolly is a very disobedient girl[;] she almost masters her own father[;] Robart quick enough to report about me & there are a lot of things what goes on over there & he takes no notice[;] he & Tom Dunolly has many rows there[;] Tom is very impertinent to him & always says he doesnt care whether he would be shifted from Coranderrk because he reckons he can do for himself but the half castes there are glad enough to run back to the station[.] Mr Ditchburn Jimima Dunolly is trying her very best to get her son Robert Wandin & his wife on Coranderrk[.] I would like to ask not to grant no permission because they try to put the pure blacks down[.] I have a liking to go back home again but I will content myself yet[;] I will soon let you know when I get unsettled[.] Captain & Mrs Crawford are very nice[;] they gave us what little they had like cups saucers & plates. Mr Ditchburn we have no cooking vessels[;] no tub for washing[;] boiler for meat and no chairs neither safe for putting our food into[;] its real awkward[;] we cant live like dogs here[;] we were comfortable at Coranderrk and had everything what we wanted so if we are here for some time would you kindly send us for what Ive told you about because Mr Ditchburn I have to borrow things & I dont like that[;] people like to have their own things[;] only for Emily Stephen being here I dont know what I would of done for little things[.] I was staying

with her when we first came but now I am in my own house and Mr Ditchburn I have no broom to sweep up[;] its a great nuisance having to run about here & there for everything what I need[.] I like to use my own things while I am here[.] I only wish you could come & give us a call while we are here[.] I was very sorry I didnt call to see you but my foot was sore & tired[;] besides I was sitting down at the Federal Metropole. Dear Mr Ditchburn I hope this letter will reach you safely & that we can get the little things which we have asked for[;] we are getting on alright with Captain & Mrs Crawford[;] they are very good to us & also to all the people here[.] Mrs Crawford is a very good mistress[;] she attends her sick people here regularly[;] we will try to do our very best to please both Mr & Mrs Crawford so you may here good reports about me & my husband[.] I gave you the full particulars about myself as I would rather explain to you than any other I will close

Alex sends his best regards to you

Believe me

I am your true friend

Mary Ellen McRae

Hoping & Trusting to hear from you please

Over 1915 the McRae family asked to be allowed to return to their home at Coranderrk. In early 1916 the BPA gave them temporary permission to stay at the station.

*Mary McRae, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
10 March, 1916*⁴²¹

Dear Sir

I now write you these few lines to let you know I am still the same & not over my big trouble yet, Sir we have not received our boxes yet[;] it seems they went on to Bairnsdale[.] Alex Mullett who is the mail man kindly enquired at the Healesville Railway Station one day last week & the station master told him the boxes were at Bairnsdale & the station master from there wanted to know where they were to be sent to[.] Mullett told them it was to come to Healesville[;] since that time we have heard not any more about our things[;] we are so very anxious about them as all our belongings are in them[;] likes of the blankets & other things. etc. which we need and now may I ask you kindly to enquire about the boxes please[;] hoping I am not doing wrong by writing you these few lines[.] Alex told Mr Robart about the boxes & he said he would write to you & let you know[;] we are carrying out your orders[;] our too little girls have been going to school & the last too days stayed out as on account of their bad ears[;] they both have which discharge any time of the day. we are at present staying with mother who gave us her front room & she has taken the back kitchen[;] we must thank you once again for the kindness you did for us while being in your office[;] also Mr Callaway Mr Robart & Mrs

Robart are treating us very kindly on the whole
and now will close

With best regards
Believe me
I am yours obediently
Mary E McRae

Mary gave birth to a daughter named Josephine on 1 May, 1916 at Coranderrk. Mary was ill after the birth and went to hospital.

Mary McRae, Women's Hospital, Melbourne, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 15 May, 1916⁴²²

My Dear Mr Ditchburn

Just these few lines to let you know I am still in the hospital[.] I am in another ward downstairs[.] you were enquiring how I was the other day[.] I was in Ward 3[.] the sister told me my Secretary was asking about me[.] I have been so anxious to see your kind smiling face[.] I suppose you are too busy that you are not being able to come & visit me[.] Mr Ditchburn I am getting along nicely[.] I was very bad after my confinement[.] I will be in here a fortnight on Thursday coming[.] Today my baby is a fortnight old[.] a little girl[.] she was born on the 1st May[.] I was bad Mon & Tues nights[.] mother asked for a doctor just to see what was the matter with me but Mr & Mrs Robart didnt think the doctor was needed so Alex went down on Wednesday morning as my pains were getting worse[.] Mrs Robart came up as she was just on her way to Healesville[.] in the afternoon she put the thermometer in my mouth & said I was just a little over[.] I was in very high fever[.] however Mr Robart went into Healesville & came back again in Dr Parker's buggy[.] when he came it was somewhere about 5[.] he looked at me & at once injected my back & said to mother I have to come Thursday morning to the Women's Hospital[.] I myself didnt care much about coming here but Mr Ditchburn I have been very ill & did not know it although Mr Robart told me it wasnt serious[.] but when I came in the sister & nurses of the ward said I was very sick...I had [?] of blood poison [?] so I was lucky I came in time[.] I am feeling much stronger & can sit up but the doctor wont let me get up & I am anxious to get home again & I wanted you to ask them when I can go home[.] I am tired of being in bed & like to be home again[.] I know Ive got to have patience[.] kindly excuse lead pencil as Ive no ink & pen downstairs[.] Ive had Sarah Hunter & her daughter Maggie last Sunday & thats all[.] Alex came last Tues & went home. I will close from your friend

Mary McRae

Mary returned to Coranderrk shortly afterwards. She and Alex considered leaving the station and eventually left in November 1916 to

go to a camp at Saints Rest. However they returned in late January 1917 and asked to stay.

*Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah,
23 May, 1917⁴²³*

Memo

With reference to the request that you be supplied with more labour for Station, I have to inform you that the Vice-Chairman has directed that the McRae's (Alex and Mary) be returned to Lake Condah from Coranderrk. Alex McRae has given up the drink altogether and apparently Mrs McRae's health has not benefited to any extent since her transfer. Moreover too many of Mary McRae's relatives are either stationed at Coranderrk or in the vicinity.

The McRaes ended up staying at Coranderrk, however, because they interviewed Mr Bowser in Melbourne and he told them to return to Coranderrk for the moment as the Board was presently considering the whole question of the settlement of the Aborigines.

*Mary McRae, Coranderrk, to Mr Galbraith, manager, Lake Condah,
4 December, 1917⁴²⁴*

Dear Sir

I now write you these few lines hoping this letter will find you and Mrs Galbraith keeping well as it leaves Alex myself and children the same at present[.] Mr Galbraith will you kindly do me a favour by writing in to the Board for Frank & Lizzie asking their permission for coming here for the Xmas holidays please & tell Frank to behave himself & to be obedient to you & Mrs Galbraith[.] I would not ask you Mr Galbraith but I feel certain you will help me as I will tell you my reason[.] I and Alex are leaving Coranderrk altogether and are going to live at Bunyip where we were last year and before leaving I thought I would just write to ask you to kindly ask the Board's permission[.] Mr Bowser who now is the Chief Secretary we know him well[.] I am almost certain he will grant their permission[;] If he only heard reports from you[.] I do hope and pray that you will kindly help me as you & Mrs Galbraith always helped me before & I am sure you are both still our friends[.] I would like Frank to be obedient to you & do whatever you or Mrs Galbraith want him to do[.] I shall write to him also hoping he is not giving any more trouble[.] Mr Galbraith If you will oblige me you will receive something for your trouble[.] May you be able to help me[.] I'd like to see them by next week or after but before Xmas[;] if you can help me please as I know you must say whether Frank has been behaving himself first[;] so I thought I'd write and ask your

permission[.] I will close with
best respects to you & Mrs Galbraith
Believe me
I am the same friend
Mary E McRae
I will be so pleased to hear the result

Florence Moffatt

*Florence Moffatt, Lake Tyers, to Mr McLeod, Chief Secretary,
21 March, 1917⁴²⁵*

Dear Sir

Your visit to Lake Tyers Mission Station has made matters worse. You gave Mr Greene notice that he wasnt to be so hard on the Aborigines of the Station[;] when they wanted to go any where they was to only let him know where they were going. There to-day I asked him if I could go out fishing with my daughter Sarah Scott[;] she an her husband Braggin Scott live over at Mr Dobie's Lake Tyers House[.] Well I asked permission from Mr Greene if I could go out with them (He said no). I asked him 3 times to day an he told me no if I went against him I would be punished[;] do you think that is right I am to be a prisoner here on the station because Braggin Scott spoke up for his rights when the members of the Board had a meeting in the school...Mr Greene is very hard an spiteful[.] I feel as if I could run away out of his sight[;] spiting me as if I spoke up in the school. I think he worse with his treatment[;] dare any body say a wrong word Woe to him or her[;] he wont even let Sarah an Braggin come to the station for Divine Services on Sundays[;] he forbade them to come. is it right that I am stopped from going out fishing with my daughter. your aboriginal servant

Florence Moffatt

Maggie Johnson

*Maggie and William Johnson, Lake Tyers, to Mrs Bon, BPA,
3 June, 1917⁴²⁶*

Dear Madam

Allow me to inform you that we received no rations for a length of time[;] not since that meeting in the schoolhouse[;] the manager wants a written apology letter & that we cannot do anything of the sort until we get permission from the Board that were badly treated by him[;] my children as well[;] we got no meat no jam & no butter from the house & again did Mr McLeod gave his order to the Manager who is in charge not to bring the police which he did[;] therefore I would kindly ask you to place the matter before the Board[.] When you all came here did we not rightly understand you that we are

to receive every comforts to be given to us by our manager[?] we dont
get it waiting

an early reply
from you

We are dear maam

your humble servants
William & Maggie Johnson

Please send me a registered reply through Mr Dobie of Lake Tyers
House

Mrs Bon wrote to Mr Callaway condemning the tyrannous conduct of
Mr Greene towards the Johnson family. She wanted Greene dismissed
because he was not suited to the work of a manager and was hated by
the people at Lake Tyers.

Amelia Rose

Amelia Rose, Purnim, to BPA, 20 January, 1918⁴²⁷

Dear Sir

you will be surprised to get a letter from me. The reason I am writing
to you is about Winnie Austin[:]; you know I suppose that my brother is
her father & of course we always have a feeling towards her. I went to
Condah two years ago & she begged me to take her with us so her
mother let her come with me as she wasnt too well in health after the
whooping cough & she stayed on with an uncle & aunt of hers[:]; but
when the girl wanted to come home to her mother Mrs Galbraith
stoped her & got the Board to stop her[.] I think it was real unkind as I
have 6 children myself & I wouldnt have liked them to be treated like
that & I heard from good authority that Mrs Galbraith hasnt treated her
too well[:]; accuse her of stealing & other things just to blacken her in
the eyes of the Board[:]; it makes me feel very sorry for her[:]; it doesnt
matter what her mother is[:]; a child is got a longing to see her[:]; she has
been away two years this march & never been home once to see them
at home[:]; where is the fairness in that I would like to know. Mrs
Galbraith promised her she would let her home & then dissappoint
her[.] I reckon that is not right at all[:]; if her mother sinned she is not
the first woman & I dont think they should punish the child for her
sake[.] I would have written before but the Board promised her people
they would let her home & nothing has been done on her behalf at
all[:]; its time some one took it up & saw into it. her sister is with a very
nice lady[:]; a Mrs Beckett[:]; perhaps she would take Winnie too if you
saw her about it[.] Johana thats Winnie's sister has been with her for six
months & was let home for a month at Xmas[:]; why wasnt Winnie let
home too. so please try & let her come[.] I'll have her for a while with
me if the Board would let her[.] I dont live on the Station[.] I am
milking on a farm for a Mrs Kelly[:]; if the Board would let her come to
me for a month I would look after her & send her back. I would just

like to have her as when I lived near the station & Winnie was home she lived half her time with me[;] so I hope that someone will fix this up for me & let me know. My brother is married now but all the same he has always taken an interest in Winnie until he went to N.S.Wales to live & he has just come down for to see my sick brother[;] he was vexed to think they had kept her all this time from her mother. hoping to hear soon as possible what the Board intend to do. I was surprised to see a woman like Mrs Galbraith over young girls after having good women like Mrs Stahle & Mrs Crawford on Condah mission[.] I was reared up on Condah till I was fifteen years old in Mr Stahle's time theres a lot of difference now when the manager can do what he likes & gets drunk. I can prove it. I am not saying what I dont know about but just facts[;] hoping to hear soon

I remain

yours truly

Amelia Rose

Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 1 March, 1918⁴²⁸

Dear Sir

I would like to know if the Board had decided about my letter concerning Winnie Austin[.] I have been waiting for an answer this good while. I want to know if the Board would allow me to have her. my husband myself are milking on a dairy farm & we get £14 a month & we would be willing to keep her in food & clothes independent of the Board if they would only let us have her[.] I have only the three girls & a little boy at home. I believe she is treated very bad. The manager at Condah is not fit to be over young girls....If his wife dont treat Winnie better I'll put it in the papers about her husband. Fancy having a manager like that over a mission station. I think its disgraceful. I hope the Board will let me have Winnie[;] it hurts our feelings when we hear about her getting flogged every week for nothing at all. so please let me know as soon as possible. we live about 4 miles from the aboriginal station & I wouldnt allow her to go near it if the Board wished it

hoping to hear soon

I remain yours truly

Amelia Rose

Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary BPA, 28 March, 1918⁴²⁹

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to ask you if the Board had decided about Winnie Egan yet as I heard from a friend that Mrs Galbraith has told Winnie that if...anyone...asks her where she wants to go she has to say with Mrs Galbraith or else...she would send her to the Homes & Winnie has a horror of the Homes. so on account of all her friends here we would like the Board to put her out to work for herself away from

Mrs Galbraith[;] we dont want her home except for a holiday as her home wouldnt be good for her[.] I think she is old enough to work for herself[;] all young half castes are supposed to be out when they are fourteen years doing for themselves so I reckon that she is old enough[.] This is a free country[;] two of Winnies nearest relations have been killed helping to make our country free so I dont think the poor little girl should be bound down to a woman like Mrs Galbraith. one letter she wrote to her mother she said she would sooner be dead & buried than being with her. that is one of her letters that she was able to write without Mrs Galbraith seeing it. so we hope the Board will consider the matter & allow her to do for herself away from Mrs Galbraith[;] they are plenty real christian laides about the country that would be glad of a girl to help them. we dont wish her to come home but we want her away from Mrs Galbraith

so please Mr Parker
I hope you will do your best for us in this matter
I remain
yours truly
Amelia Rose

Religion

Christianity was a central component of mission life in the nineteenth century. Each station had its own church and religious service was ingrained in everyday life. The Christian faith was especially emphasised on those stations run by missionaries and funded by church bodies. Although the Aborigines were often compelled to attend church, it is clear that a number of them, such as Annie Manton and her daughter Violet, willingly identified themselves as Christians. Church missionary endeavour declined during the first two decades of the twentieth century; the stations were increasingly run by managers rather than missionaries, reflecting the increasingly secular outlook of the state towards Aborigines. Services continued to be held on station churches but the days of missionary activity were over.

The decline of religious teaching on the stations was dissatisfying to a number of Aboriginal people; it encouraged them to look elsewhere for meaningful religious practice and to initiate their own prayer meetings on the stations. Three such women were Maud Mullett, Lizzie McRae and Mary McRae. In 1916 Maud, who was living in Carlton, found comfort in charismatic faith and attended meetings at the Good News Hall. She was banned from visiting Coranderrk after she introduced several people there to her new found faith. Similarly, Lizzie and Mary McRae were refused permission to hold their own religious meetings at Coranderrk. Soon afterwards they found renewed Christian faith through Sister Isabella Hetherington, an Irish missionary who around 1917 established a small mission house at Bunyip in Gippsland. In 1921 Lizzie informed the Board that 'through Miss Hetherington we have seen and been taught more about Jesus, than ever any Manager and his wife on the Aboriginal Reserves in this State or any other could teach us'.

Maud Mullett

During 1916 Maud Mullett, then living in Carlton, made several visits to Coranderrk which were commented on by the manager of the station. On 9 May she arrived at Coranderrk and requested that her baby who had died in the Melbourne Hospital be buried in the station cemetery. Her request was granted. On 8 July she came to the station again and invited several of the Aborigines to the Good News Hall in Melbourne. Mr Robarts consented to this visit. However, by 17 July he had become concerned about Maud's activities and wrote to the Board, informing them that:

Yesterday she was the means of taking Willie Logan away, who left without my knowledge. Maud Mullett is a constant visitor to the Hall

where I am informed meetings of a very exciting nature are held. Her influence over the natives at present is very undesirable, as she aggravated the present state of mind which is existing among the natives. After her departure last night (Sunday) a meeting was again held in one of the cottages and the screams and wails even heard at a great distance, when they are under that spell, nothing can be done to silence the natives. I would therefore request that a letter be sent to Maud Mullett prohibiting her to visit the station.⁴³⁰

By 7 October Robarts had received no reply from the BPA to his letter of 17 July. Prompted by another visit to the station from Maud he wrote again:

Mrs Maud Mullett and a lady friend of the same following as Miss Hetherington came here this morning: they never reported themselves to me. I was not aware of them being here until some of the natives were excited at the idea of Mrs Maud Mullett's friend holding a religious meeting in one of the cottages. I saw Maude Mullett & her friend and informed them that no religious meetings were allowed to be held in the cottages.

Their visit was very disturbing[;] there was a feverishness on the station during the day and in the evening some of the natives gave way to shaking and shivering as they did when Conolly was here. In weeks past religious atmosphere has been normal; and no element should be permitted which will rouse the people. I would again ask that the permit to visit the station granted Mrs Maud Mullett be withdrawn.⁴³¹

*Secretary, BPA, to Mr Robarts, manager, Coranderrk, 10 October, 1916*⁴³²

Memo

With reference to the complaint that Mrs Maud Mullett and a lady friend visited the station on Sunday last and caused the natives to become excited at the idea of holding a religious meeting, Mr Robarts is informed that in view of Mrs Mullett's defiance of authority in removing Willie Logan, the permission granted her to visit the station has been withdrawn.

*Secretary, BPA, to Maud Mullett, Church St, Carlton,
10 October, 1916*⁴³³

Memo

Mrs Maud Mullett is informed that owing to her defiance of authority in removing the aboriginal Willie Logan from the Aboriginal Station Coranderrk, her authority to visit that station has been withdrawn.

*Mr Roberts, manager, Coranderrk, to Secretary, BPA, 4 January, 1917*⁴³⁴

Mrs Maud Mullett paid a visit to the station during the holidays & reported herself to me stating that she had not time before leaving to obtain permission from the Board. She asked if she may spend one night on the station. I permitted her to stay one night only.

Late in 1919 Maud moved to Coranderrk with her family. According to Mrs Roberts, Maud wanted to leave behind her previous life of misery and drink and had appealed to other residents to pray for her. Maud was now going regularly to morning church services at the station.⁴³⁵

Annie Manton and Violet Mullett

*Annie Manton and Violet Mullett, Coranderrk, to BPA, 4 June, 1917*⁴³⁶

Dear Sirs,

I am just writing to you to let you know that an aboriginal woman named Alice Logan is a very quarrelsome woman, & always making mischief & breaking peace amongst other women who wants to try & live a godly life & also another woman named Mary McRae; these two women are always breaking peace amongst those who are trying to live happy & to do what is right. And its not right for those two women to be here when they are always quarrelling & throwing up christianity to us & say to us that we are only mocking God & what sort of christians all filled with the devil spirits[;] this is always thrown into our faces & also those who is trying to live a christian: So dear Sir would you please kindly shift them: when Alice Logan hears any yearns about her baby she goes to an halfcaste man named Robert Wandin & tells him about the troubles instead of going to our manager Mr Robart to let him know her troubles & of course Robert Wandin talks about taking it to law. When Mr Robart our manager have us all face to face to settle the rows in christian like spirit & a quiet way but those women they go off like crackers & look for fight. They will not listen to our manager Mr Robart who tries his best to give us all a good advice to live peaceably with one another. Ever since Alice Logan came here she has been always rowing & not only that she has an halfcaste baby; she said she wont tell anyone or give anyone satisfaction who is the father of that baby. It is a disgrace to our station for an aboriginal woman to have a halfcaste baby. Why, because when white people come here; they talk about it. On Thursday evening there was a row between Alice Logan & Kate & Violet Mullett about that baby. She thinks women got nothing else to do but to sit down & talk of her baby & then she goes off rowing & abusing something terrible. Mr Robart is seeing into the matter. Those women are very uncontrollable[;] they will not listen[;] they like to have they own ways. We have two young men preaching & trying their very best to bring each & everyone on

the Lord's side; but noone will come to our meeting ever since those women throwing up christianity to our faces. Its not right for her to be here when other are trying to live a christian life & peace one with another. She is an hindrance to God's work when others are trying to keep our meetings going. Well Sir we want to know if you would shift her so that we can have peace. We have nothing against Mr Robart[;] he is fare to all[;] only some of the people grumbles because they dont get enough; they are not satisfied with what they get. They really dont know when they have a good manager because he tries his best for all. So dear Sir would you kindly get that woman shifted from here as well all like to see her shifted because she is too much looking about for rows. We all trying to live a christian life & listen to our manager but Alice Logan will not listen & take good advice from our manager. So dear Sir we will now leave you to see what is to be done with her. Trusting you will oblige yours truly

Annie Manton &
Violet Mullett

Mary McRae

Mary and Alex McRae, Coranderrk, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 1917⁴³⁷

To Dear Mrs Bonn

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord according[;] as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and Godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us unto glory & virtue. And now as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ I would kindly ask of your help on behalf of the Aborigines of Coranderrk as well as elsewhere that we may obtain our religious liberty by holding religious meetings in our cottages when Mr Robart is not holding a meeting[;] for the scripture saith the Most High doth not dwell in temples made with hands for ye are the temples of the living God[;] if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. For they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth[;] not as some having the form of godliness and denying the power thereof for they profess that they know God but in works they deny Him[;] For by the Grace of God I am fully persuaded as according to the scriptures that many of your dear people have been led away by seducing spirits and doctrines of devils[.] For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables[;] and again the word of God says to continue in the things which we have learned & hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them[.] For all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine for reproof for correction for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect throughly furnished unto all good works[;] and now dear Mrs Bon we all know

that you are a true servant in the Dear Lord and willing to help us in times of trouble[;] we earnestly beg of you that for the furtherance of Christ Kingdom and that many precious souls may be led into the way of truth and righteousness that our request may be put before the members of the Aborigines Board For we only ask for what is right in the sight of God[;] so now dear Mrs Bonn we send our Christian love to you & also you will find enclosed a little portrait of the little children[;] and now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling & to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy to the only wise God our Saviour be glory & majesty dominion & power both now and ever Amen

We remain
Servants down at Jesus' feet
Alexander & Mary McRae

Mrs Bon forwarded this letter to Mr Ditchburn, who replied to her that '[w]ith reference to the letter of Mary McRae I am directed to inform you that she is so obviously actuated by a ruling desire to make mischief that no weight should be attached to her communication.'⁴³⁸ On 17 April Mary and Alex visited the BPA office in Melbourne to make several specific requests.

*Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Mr Roberts, manager, Coranderrk, 19 April, 1917*⁴³⁹

Memo

Alex and Mrs McRae were here on 17/4/17 and Mrs McRae on 18/4/17. They asked for:-

- (1) Greater religious freedom as regards prayer meetings
- (2) That Mrs Nelson, Yarrawonga, be granted permission to visit them at Coranderrk for one week from 23/4/17.
- (3) That Frank Darby be allowed to reside at Coranderrk with his wife and step son Freddie Carmichael
- (4) More blankets as they complain of insufficiency of supply
- (5) Permission for brother to visit the station once a week

Mr Parker stated in his letter that (1) had already been dealt with. Mr Roberts replied that he had no objection to Mrs Nelson visiting for a week and that the blankets had been ordered. Not long afterwards, on 14 May, Mr Roberts requested that the McRaes be removed to Lake Tyers, arguing that '[t]his woman has done nothing but breed mischief and discontent since her return. The station is kept somewhat in a state of ferment by her bad influence.'⁴⁴⁰

Mary McRae, Bunyip, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, February, 1918⁴⁴¹

Dear Mr Parker

Just a line to let you know we are keeping well and we hope & trust to the Lord you are the same[;] as I was asking you about my mother coming over here I very likely may want her very soon[.] I have already written to her & told her to be on the lookout for a wire any time this month[;] hoping & trusting by God's Grace there will be nothing to hinder her from coming[.] Praise God we are on a beautiful Christian land what has been bought last year for the purpose of worshipping the dear Lord in spirit & in truth[.] I thank my God for raising me up to what he did[;] my eyes was blinded in sir but I thank God He has wonderfully opened my eyes & has come to reign in our hearts through his wonderful spirit praise God[;] kindly give our best remembrances to Mr Bowser who I believe was God who gave him a good heart the way he treated Alex & myself[.] I will write to him later on[.] I hope you will excuse this bad writing with lead pencil Mr Parker please[.] I will close with best respects from yrs truly

Mary McRae

Mary and Alex moved to Lake Tyers later that month.

*Mary McRae, Lake Tyers, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
1 August, 1918⁴⁴²*

Dear Mr Parker

I now write to you these few lines hoping & trusting by God's Grace this letter will find you in the best of health as it leaves us all the same at present[.] I wish to thank you ever so very much for your kind attendance to Alex myself and children also my dear mother the day we came to see you Mr Parker[.] Alex has received his clothes & is very gratefull for them as they are so nice and warm and fits him nicely[;] we are gratefull and thankfull to the Dear Lord for his kindness through the Members of the Aborigines Board for we believe its the Dear Lord who has provided for us in all things & has given our Members good hearts to attend the natives[;] may you all be blessed in every good work you do & that you will be protected from all dangers through the streets of Melbourne[;] we are still in Franks house and are all happy[;] we will be pleased when the new houses will go up[;] we are going to wait with patience for them[;] the men are going to be very busy tomorrow[;] from now the plans are being made[.] Its a very good idea[;] Alex will always be punctual to his work & will give no trouble[;] we mean to work for God & please him in all things as its said in God's Holy word we must obey our masters in the flesh Praise God[.] I will draw my letter to a close

From yours truly

Mary McRae

Mary McRae, Lake Tyers, to Mrs Bon, member, BPA, 19 August, 1918⁴⁴³

Mr Dearest Mrs Bon

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father & from the Lord Jesus Christ[.] I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ[.] I thought I would write to you as we are living here now[.] I know you will be overjoyed to hear from us Praise God[;] about February we left Miss Hetherington[.] Alex and Violet Mullet were also there[;] we all went back to Coranderrk[;] before Alex & myself went on the station we were staying over at Tarawarra[.] Mr McAlister gave Alex work for the time being and he fixed up about us returning to Coranderrk where we then remained till our passes were ready for us to come to Lake Tyers[;] we like this place very much at present[;] it is very cold[;] we shall be very thankful when the warm weather sets in[;] well Dearest Mrs Bon Alex & I are so pleased to hear you are still in the Aborigines Board as we were told you were going to resign but oh we are gratefull & thankfull to our Lord Saviour for all his sparing mercies to you & the good Will he has given you to attend all the Aborigines and I wish to thank you through the Dear Lord for all your good kind attendance to my dear brother and sister in law who last visited you[;] they have been telling us about you and how you visited them in Melbourne and looked after them[;] well they both do not know how much to thank[;] we are living in a Christian like manner Alex & myself since we came[;] always have our little meetings ourselves in front of our house as we have been prohibited from having the Church[;] when Alex spoke to Mr Ferguson about having the Church he told Alex to his face he could not very well have it as he would have to get permission from the Bishop[;] what is there ideas about that[?]
would you kindly help us as we do want to do good here[;] every body seems to be very attentive in listening to us but Praise God what the Dear Lord wants is for all to be assembled together in one place where we all may worship the Dear Lord in spirit & in truth as we are led by the spirit of God to deliver his message in the street[;] we dont go out in our own strength but on the strength of Almighty God[;] the ones that are willing to hear God's Word are Mrs John Conolly who now lives here and Mrs O'Rourke[;] others are on their verandahs listening[.] Dearest Mrs Bon the gambling has been raging here but since the Eight hours work has begun the men have hardly any time to sit & play even to have their food[;] it would be ever so much nicer if we were at liberty to have a Prayer meeting in the Church as we believe all our Dear ones here would come & hear something good...all have sinned & come short of the Glory of God[.] I cannot help from thanking the Dear Lord from Raising me up in health & strength[;] once we were dead in sin and he has brought us out of darkness into his marvellous light[.] Dear Mrs Bon you will be sorry to hear that Harry Hayes has been very ill since last week[;] he is still in bed[.] Alex & I have

Prayers with him & read the Bible to him[;] he takes changes at different times[;] you will be pleased to hear Mrs John Conolly who is now a widow is hear and does a good lot of work for any body who is ill[;] when she is called she at once attends the sick[;] she really is doing good work[;] she is now attending Harry Hayes[;] when Lydia & Charlie Green's daughter was ill Mrs Conolly helped in every way & had the patient clean before the dear little darling passed away[;] this heavy cold is going around[.] Frank is in bed just for today[.] I daresay you heard about me having another little baby boy[;] he was born at the Mission Home[;] he is named after Miss Hetherington's cousin David Hetherington & also herself. Dear Mrs Bon about Mrs Conolly she always says she does things for kindness but could she be allowed money for her keep as she has no help[;] she attended Grace Edwards who gave birth to a baby girl[;] there are too confinements cases here[;] Lydia is to laid up anytime & Bella Mrs Jack McDougall but not yet. Mrs McCreddie is the one that has last been attending the women[;] some of them dont care for her much[;] she is still at Lindenow & have been waiting for her pass[;] also her husband & daughter in law Kate[;] Mrs Conolly said she wouldnt like to put herself in the way or even to take it away from her but I think Mrs Ferguson will have to call on help as she has so far done. Mrs Conolly is helping Mrs Ferguson in serving the little things. I must close mail soon in

I shall be pleased
to get a reply
concerning the
Church

Believe me
I am yours truly
Mary E McRae

Alex & children
sends Christian love
not forgetting myself
I join also excuse mistake

*Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Mr Ferguson, manager, Lake Tyers,
12 September, 1918⁴⁴⁴*

Sir,

Letters have been received addressed to the Hon the Chief Secretary (per Mrs Bon) asking that aborigines be allowed to hold prayer meetings in the Church at Lake Tyers. The Hon the Chief Secretary is of opinion that such meetings should only be allowed if under proper supervision of either a white or competent black person. I have by direction therefore to inquire as to whether there is any one you can recommend who is willing to supervise such meetings.

Mr Ferguson replied that there was no one he could recommend. He explained that since the arrival of the McRaes there had been conflict over religion at the station. He explained:

The McRae family was regarded by the Aborigines as the representative of a Miss Heatherington, who I am informed was here

about two years ago, and succeeded in temporarily upsetting the church services. The aborigines appeared anxious to avoid a repetition of that experience. My efforts to bring the two sections together were of little avail as the real question at issue for the time being appeared to be: – who was to have charge of the Church of England at Lake Tyers? The Bishop of Gippsland or Miss Heatherington and her representatives. The position is rather better since Mrs McRae joined the choir, and I hope soon to be able to report that all are working together for the common good.

Lizzie McRae

Lizzie and Henry McRae, the Mission House, Bunyip, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, June, 1919⁴⁴⁵

Sir

We received the parcel of small goods on Monday[;] also the others before. Thanking you very much for past kindness[.] May the Lord richly bless you and prosper the work of your hands[.] We did not think we would get them being off a Reserve for 3 years[.] But we will believe that God overrules all things for His own glory[.] We are quite happy here with Miss Hetherington & her fellow labourers[;] both Henry & I hope to be worthy of our calling by Christ Jesus who is worthy to be praised[;] will trust & pray that God may bless you[;] once again Thanking you for the things

We are

Yours learning at the feet of Jesus

L & H McRae

Elizabeth and Henry McRae, Mission House, Bunyip, to Mr Heathershaw, Chief Commissioner of Police, Melbourne, 6 September, 1921⁴⁴⁶

Dear Sir

In reference to a letter received from Mr Parker of the B.P.A. concerning Railway expenses of Nellie Baird⁴⁴⁷ which was sent to Miss Hetherington who hasnt any money to pay to them. I and my husband are witnesses of this[;] also that she sent Miss Vale for Nellie and that there was no warrant sent out to arrest Nellie[.] We also know that Kate McLellan was the oldest of the two and she should have been dealt with[;] she should not have taken Nellie from Miss Hetherington who cared, loved, and tendered her as her own child[.] We also know Miss Hetherington gave Miss Vale enough money to bring herself & Nellie home to Bunyip[;] that there was no need for Police escort and we do know that the B.P.A. didnt help Miss Hetherington from the beginning when they knew she had these girls[.] As we were here from the time the girls were brought here when they escaped from the convent. It was the Police himself who asked Miss Hetherington to go for them, and when she brought them home they were almost naked with hardly any clothes on. And so she kept them for twelve months without any

government support. We ask you is it fair to a Lady who gives up her whole life to God to care for others[;] especially those of a despised and degraded race whom white men of today believe that God cant save[;] and we do Praise God as full blood natives of Victoria[;] my husband and I can say that through Miss Hetherington we have seen and been taught more about Jesus, than ever any Manager and his wife on the Aboriginal Reserves in this State or any other could teach us[;] for the white man thinks a black person has no mind[.] But praise His name God is no respecter of persons[.] Again I ask is it fair in a christianised country to oppress the stranger in our native land who came from a far country for His names sake in the gospel to teach us about the love of Jesus Christ our Redeemer who died to save all mankind from sin[;] black as well as white[.] all nations in one[;] and so we believe it is due to the B.P.A. to pay Miss Hetherington her share for the care of these State girls and whatever expenses she owes as they say could be payed out for what others expenses there are. We have been here and seen her toil from 3 oclock in the early morning till 8 oclock at night with the mattock putting in vegetables for food for these girls when it should have been the Board of Protection of Aborigines to give government supply at once when they knew they were here. It is a very unjust act of unkindness[.] We dont believe a man can be a christian that can so try to deceive a missionary lady who lives on faith...We believe you are a good man as Miss Hetherington speakd highly of you and if you are the same Mr Heathershaw who came about that business of Mr Robarts at Coranderrk when the natives rose up against him and spoke against him to Mr J Murray who was then Premier[.] We believe you can help our dear Miss Hetherington for Jesus sake[.] a lonely missionary out from Ireland without kith or kin and Dear Sir Miss Hetherington does not know we are writing to you. This letter for you to help and guide us in this matter and so we believe the Board of Protection of Aborigines should pay Miss Hetherington for the keep of those State girls for twelve months without government aid except just for three weeks before Xmas[;] trusting we have not put you to an inconvenience

Believe us

In Jesus Name

Elizabeth and Henry McRae

Sustenance and Material Assistance

Most of the letters in this section were written from the 1890s to the 1920s, a period in which many Aboriginal people were forced off the mission stations. By the 1920s only Lake Tyers remained as a fully operating residential station. The BPA continued to issue the older people with minimal rations; women such as Esther McGuinness were in regular communication with the Secretary in relation to the content and receipt of such rations. Most Aboriginal people, however, had to stake out a living amongst the white community and received little or nothing from the Board. Life was extremely hard for these families. Women frequently appealed to the Board for assistance in the way of food rations, clothing, blankets, and building material. In many cases their families were sick and their husbands unable to find employment; sometimes the women asked to be allowed to stay temporarily on the stations.

In a few cases women and children suffered extra hardship through their husbands' spending of money on drink: 'sometimes we have to go without' wrote Amelia Rose in 1916. Winter was an especially tough time for these poor families. Lizzie Crough, whose family lived a particularly precarious existence in the early twentieth century, wrote to the Board in May 1904 asking for clothes and rations for her family: 'my children clothes is threadbare & they have to go to school half freeze'. The Board sometimes approved the women's requests and sometimes did not. Georgina Clark, born at Lake Condah, was in 1918 living 'a bare existence' on land near the station. Her white husband was in gaol and she and her children were living in tents. She wrote to the Board requesting an empty cottage from the mission station. Her request was refused.

Louisa Briggs

*Carl Kramer, missionary, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
1 July, 1879⁴⁴⁸*

I am glad you do not take any notice of Mrs Briggs application for this, that and the other things. If her big daughter Sarah would do some work they would have money enough to buy their necessities.

*Mrs Briggs, Ebenezer, to Rev. Strickland, manager, Coranderrk,
1 December, 1881⁴⁴⁹*

Mr Strickland

Sir

I have the honour to inform you that these men are all going down to Cpt. Page about clothes and Boots and wanting so much a week for the work they do on the Station[;] they go to the harvest about seven miles away from here and get 30/shillings a week and the shearing they get a pound a week and I dont think its right for them to get that...there is only a few men that is working[;] the Boys chiefly does all the work here for what there is to do[;] with what wages they earn at the Shearing time they can well afford to buy Boots Hats and Coats for themselves[;] if they wanted [?] wages and clothes it would be better for them to go to Coranderrk to work

I hope you all well as we are. Remember me Kindly to all

I am

dear Sir

Your truly

friend

Mrs Briggs

*Mrs Briggs, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
15 February, 1882⁴⁵⁰*

Dear Sir

I now takes this hurry opportunity of writing these few lines to you;

I was expecting you iys[?] since I got your letter;

please, will you sinds me a pass up: So I could go to Coranderrk; and if you did sends me a pass let me know; so I will know and wont expected a pass from you[;] if you intended to send me a pass up let me know; and I will know to know; let me know by Tuesday or[?] Saturday[;] the place is too hot: and we are starvin

So I must conclude this short note with the conclusion

with my best reagrds to you

I am Dear Sir

yours truly

Mrs Briggs

Write the return of mail

*Carl Kramer, missionary, Ebenezer, to Captain Page, Secretary, BPA,
22 February, 1882⁴⁵¹*

Sir

In reference to the "Starving" of Mrs. Briggs and family I beg to state for the information of the Board that the following is the scale of

rations allowed to each member (adult) of the family viz: flour, as much as required sugar and tea, 2 lbs and [?] lb resp. Oatmeal, for porridge as much as required, rice or peas for dinner and from 4 to 5 lbs of meat of excellent quality and always fresh. Where quantity is given the younger children are allowed half (tea, sugar, and meat). These people seem to have a notion that the Board must find them in everything and that by no means must they spend any of their earnings for meat etc. The son-in-law earned a considerable sum of money at shearing and so did Willy Briggs but it was all foolishly spent in buying a pair of horses and an old buggy to make a show. At present the same man earns from 4/- to 6/- a day at killing rabbits which rather than buy necessaries, he spends in grog and treating them. Mrs Briggs also earned a deal of ironing, washing [for?] a sick woman, but it is all gone apparently. In the face of all this and considering that there are thousands of rabbits about which can be got without any difficulty whatever it is almost too much for Mrs Briggs to say they are starving.

Ellen Good

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Ellen Good, Framlingham,
13 November, 1890⁴⁵²*

My dear Mrs. Good

I heard from Mr Stahle that all you residents at Framlingham had received orders for rations up to the 17th instant (that is Monday next) and this [?] also for the order book. Now someone has said that the orders had only been until last Friday and that they had no more rations. I shall meet all of you next Monday, when you get fresh orders, but in case, one or other of you is out of rations, they can get a few days supply till I come next Monday, when all things will be arranged to your satisfaction.

Trusting that all are well and that you make good progress

I am yours truly F.A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Ellen Good, Framlingham,
20 June, 1891⁴⁵³*

Mrs William Good

Your letter of the 10th instant has arrived here in due time, and I must say, that I fully agree and sympathise with you that the Ross's should get their children into service at once, and you will have heard that I had given instruction to that effect. It must be very annoying to you all, when they behave as they did to you. I hope you all assist the law, to get them to proper places at once.

Your asking for some tomahawks is very reasonable and I will do my best to get you some. How many do you want? and will you ask Mr. Lewis if he has any? Please let me know soon

With best wishes

F.A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Ellen Good, Framlingham,
26 May, 1897⁴⁵⁴*

My dear Mrs Good

I inclose you an order on Mr. Lewis for 20lb of nails and William can select the kind he wants.

A large parcel of things, addressed to Mr Lewis will be sent to day and if you ask Mr. Lewis to open the parcel, you will find all the things for you and your brother and the children in that parcel, which is addressed to you; but you must send a letter to thank the Board for their kindness.

Your application for a certificate for your brother must go first before the Board[;] in the mean time he can help William with the fence.

I remain Yours truly
F.A. Hagenauer

Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Gleeson, local guardian, 14 March, 1913⁴⁵⁵

Dear Sir

Just a line to let you know I will be going away for 9 or ten days to Melbourne & I want to know if you could get a little more oatmeal for William as he eats nothing but oatmeal & a pound of it is not much for him for the week & he has it every morning & he is not so well[;] so if you could try & ask for a bit more[;] this is all

best wishes yours resp
E. Good

Ellen's request was approved.

Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 31 July, 1913⁴⁵⁶

Dear Sir

I received the things alright & have given them out & I wish to remind you not to send anything now to Cudgee & if you have anything now to send please to send it to Warrnambool as the river is rising & we can not get over to Cudgee or Panmure. I wish to let you know that William is not much better[;] he has only improved a little since we had the doctor[;] he has been in bed a month now. John is very anxious to hear about his bed. I think it spoilt him a bit when he went to Coranderrk, he had a good bed there[;] this is all with kind regards to you

yours faithfully

Ellen Good

Lena Austin & children X
Ada Austin X
Harriet Wisey X
Jessie Lancaster X

Bessie Wralings X
Emily Edwards X
Ellen Goods X

Ellen's husband William died in October 1913.

*Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 19 April, 1914*⁴⁵⁷

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to you to ask you if you could get the Board to get Amelia Rose & children some rations as it seems very hard to see them not having much to eat. Dont think I am making any complaint about Henry but as I told you before he is not capable of doing anything for them & they are pretty hard up; I cant tell you how sorry I feel for the little ones with scarcely anything & sometimes nothing at all[;] So I cant help them myself[;] so if you can do anything for them as soon as you can as the mother has not been in good health lately & this will put her right back again. So if you can do anything for them I will feel much obliged & grateful to you

Hope you will do what you can[;] this is all[;]
best wishes yours truly E. Good

*Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
6 January, 1917*⁴⁵⁸

Dear Sir

I am writing to ask you if I could have the use of one cow off the station as you promised me one to milk for my own use as I have none of my own. So I hope you let me know soon as I would like very much like to get one[;] as you told me when I was in town to write to you about it. So this is all with best wishes.

yours faithfully

Ellen Good

The Secretary referred this letter to the local guardian, Mr Johnstone, who replied that Ellen was now milking one of the Board's cows for her own use.

*Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 25 March, 1917*⁴⁵⁹

Dear Sir

Just a line to you as there is one thing I forgot to ask for while you were here & that is some wire for the fence & this fence is on the main road & the posts are all rotten so my nephew is going to put it up before he goes to shearing. You might have noticed the fence as you went out through my gate into the lane. So if the Board could grant me two coils of barb wire to do it up as I cant manage to get it as the fence wants doing up badly[;] so if you would please let me know as soon as

you can. This is all & I hope you do your best for me & I will feel very much obliged to you & the Board

I remain yrs resp

Ellen Good

Purnim

The Secretary asked Mr Johnstone to let him know the local cost of the wire. The BPA then gave permission for the wire to be purchased locally for Ellen.

Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 13 April, 1917⁴⁶⁰

Dear Madam

Just a line to let you know that we received the clothes yesterday, I am sorry to say that during all my years, I never was so surprised at the poor quality and small quantity of the things we got. When Mr Johnson brought the parcel he opened them out before us all. In one parcel there were 18 yds of print. 6 yds of flannellette. 1 hose. 2 pkt needles. that was one parcel. The parcel contained 6 yds galatea[.] The 18 yds had to be divided between six women and cut up into three yds each. Do you think that 3 yds of print would make each one of us a dress. And the smaller containing 6 yds galatea had to be cut up between six women, each receiving one yard. I really don't know what the Board is thinking. So I thought I would write and let you know, so that you will be able to put it before the "Board", and let them see what we received. as this was supposed to be our "Summer Clothes", I think they are neglecting us, because last Winter we did not get half of our things. So I hope if we are to receive our "winter" clothes it won't be any later than next month. (May) And Mrs Blair and Mrs Edwards did not get their clothes yet. As they always get them ready-made as they are not able to make them up, themselves. I am not writing this letter for myself, but, I am writing it at the request of others, as I don't like making complaints, but this time I had to let you know how we are treated. Dear Madam, I would be very much obliged if you would see into it. & oblige yours resp.

(Mrs) E. Good

I am just giving you the list of what we always received. This is what I generally get for myself.

9 yds material for dress

3 yds to make petticoats

2 chemise ready made

two nightgowns

2 hose. 6 yds flannel. 1 hat. 1 pr boots. 3 reels white cotton and three of black. two handkerchiefs one hair comb 1 fine comb. This is a list of what we were all getting all the years I have been living here until last winter. And the women with children used to receive more according

to the number of children they have.

In 1919 Ellen's nephew John Egan had a leg amputated.

Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, March, 1919⁴⁶¹

Dear Sir

Just a line in answer to yrs I received some time ago & for sending me word how John was[.] I am sure I thank you for the trouble you have taken[.] I have heard from the hospital twice by wire that he as been very ill & was not yet out of danger[.] But I do hope he gets better. I was going to ask you to ask the Board if they could let me have two or three dozen traps as the rabbits are very bad here & it is the only way to destroy them[.] So I hope you will try & get me some & I will feel much obliged to you. This is all with best wishes

yours resp.

E. Good

Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 18 May, 1919⁴⁶²

Dear Sir

I am forwarding a bill of Swan's for £3.16 for John Egan's bed & mattress[;] they sent the bill to me as Mr Harvey is laid up with influenza so I dont know if I am doing right in sending it to you for payment[;] so I suppose you will know all about it. And when do you think we will be able to get the rest of our clothing as we need calico very much

I remain

yours truly
Ellen Good

In mid-1920 Ted and Susie Egan, who had been living in New South Wales, wished to stay with Ellen Good at Framlingham as Ted had been unwell.

Ellen Good, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 29 June, 1920⁴⁶³

Dear Sir

I just received a note from Mrs Egan asking if I was agreeable to take them in here [and] that you gave them permission to come[.] If you have done so I would not like to refuse Ted as he as been a good boy to me & until he as had a rest. I will be only too glad to help him. As long as you see that they are helped a little with rations & that. So of course you can send them as soon as you are ready. Will close now with kind regards to you

I am yrs resp
E. Good

Emily Brindle

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to John Bulmer, manager, Lake Tyers, 26 August, 1891⁴⁶⁴

Sir

In answer to your application for the supply of one months ration for the Half Caste woman Emily Brindle, who has been ill, I have the honour to inform you, that under these circumstances you may allow "one more month", but after that it must stop. Kindly have your orders attached to the...form in due time.

BPA, Minutes, 2 September, 1891⁴⁶⁵

The Aboriginal woman, Bessie Cameron, applied by letter to the Secretary to allow Emily Brindle and children to live at Ramahyuck for a few months. Secretary said already granted, as emergency, 1 month's rations to Mrs Brindle & trusted the board would favourably consider Mrs Cameron's application. Request granted.

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale, 4 February, 1892⁴⁶⁶

Mr dear Mrs. Brindle

Your applications have duly arrived and I have sent at once the very nice clothes for your boys to Ramahyuck, so that Bessie will take them to you when she goes for you and the boys to Bairnsdale. I have also got the pass for you and her and the boys She will let you know next week when she can come. It will be a very good thing for the boys to get a proper home.

I hope Mary is doing well

With best wishes to you all

F. A. Hagenauer

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale, 12 April, 1892⁴⁶⁷

My dear Mrs. Brindle

I have been exceedingly sorry to hear that great sickness and affliction has come upon you and your family but I hope that you have not forgotten to put your trust in the Lord Jesus, who is always ready to help and who will help you and your poor darling Mary through all your troubles. – I inclose you an order to Mr. R. Patterson for a supply of rations in your trouble, bring the whole, which is pinned together to him and he will give you all on the order.

Then find also a postal note for 5/- in the envelope you get the money at the Post office, so that you can buy some meat for poor Mary. Please sign the inclosed receipt for the 5/- and send it back to me, and

let me know how you and poor Mary are getting on. If I can do anything then I do it gladly.

With Christian regards

Your old friend F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale,
16 August, 1892⁴⁶⁸*

My dear Mrs. Brindle

I duly received your telegram to send pass for the Hamiltons by "Telegraph", but you know quite well that such a thing could not be done.

Then in regards to the Hamiltons I must say, that they left Ramahyuck without saying a single word, and Mrs. Hagenauer nor myself knew anything that they had left etc. – Later on I heard from someone, that they had gone for Ellen to be confined at your house. I then thought they had arranged all that with you and as you are always very kind to any of the Blacks I could easily believe it, [?] I thought that it was very unfair of the Hamiltons to go and take your hospitality in such a way, and now I find, that you cannot do it. It was really not nice nor kind of the Hamiltons to leave their home as they did and to deal with their relations in such a shocking way. Then again you was so good to give them money to go to the Entrance, but you did not know, that Blacks could not go from station to station as they please, and of course, Mr. Bulmer could not take them in, for each person swells the expenses against the Government [?]. Blacks are free to please themselves, if they behave well and earn their living, otherwise they must be subject to law and order like any other man.

The Hamiltons are quite welcome back to Ramahyuck, but of course, they must keep law and order.

I hope you are quite well and that you got a good place for Emma, and good news from your husband. If Bessie has come to you already give my regards to her.

With best wishes

Yours Faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale,
7 February, 1893⁴⁶⁹*

My dear Mrs. Brindle

I only received your letter on my return to the Office and I am happy to inform you that by this train with which this letter goes to you a parcel will also go to your address Railway Station Bairnsdale, and it contains 2 pairs of blankets.

12 yards double width of white sheeting

calico 6 coloured handkerchiefs

You will get the parcel by calling at the railway station.

You must, of course, at once after receipt of the parcel write to me, that you got it. How is poor Johnny and Emma?

With best wishes

Yours very faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Taylor [Brindle],
Bairnsdale, 22 February, 1894⁴⁷⁰*

My dear friend

I have brought your application before the Board and I am glad that an exception will be made so that you shall receive some assistance for a short time and the order will be sent to you in a few days and will begin on the first of March. You will at the end of March receive a second order for the following months of April[;] of course, you know, that in reality you do not come under the Board any more and I hope that your husband will soon get work as he is a good hand in it. I hope also that your health will soon get better.

With kindest regards

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Taylor [Brindle], Bairnsdale,
5 April, 1894⁴⁷¹*

Madam

Your letter of the 2nd inst duly received and an order for supply of rations enclosed herewith.

I have now to inform you that owing to the fund of the Board being exhausted, no further supplies can be granted and moreover it must be clearly understood that a husband shall support his wife[.]

I have the honour to be

Obediently yours

W. J. Ditchburn

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, Bairnsdale,
21 August, 1894⁴⁷²*

Mrs Emily Brindle

Your letter of the 16th, addressed to me to Ramahyuck has safely reached me and whilst I fully sympathise with your desires to come and live at Ramahyuck until you go with your husband to New South Wales, but as the Board on a former occasion refused the application I think it will not be advisable to [?] it again.

But I had brought the matter before the Board and they kindly granted rations for next month, for which I inclose the needful orders, I hope, before you go to the Mountains to see first[?].

Should your rations not last till you go please let me know.

Has Haines Cameron come by ship to Bairnsdale?
With best wishes
yours faithfully
F. A. Hagenauer

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Taylor [Brindle], Bairnsdale,
12 September, 1894⁴⁷³*

Madam

It has been reported to this office that your husband is employed at Mr [?] farm at Clydebank and that he is earning good wages, but considering your present wants I take it on myself to send you the enclosed orders for rations. As the funds of the Board are very low and assistance can only be given to those half castes who come within the meaning of the law I have to inform you no further grant can be made to you. If your children are in want they must be sent to the Institute for Destitute children. You and your husband spent, last year, a large sum of money which could have provided you with a nice home, and now you have to reap the fruit of it.

Obediently yours
W. J. Ditchburn

On 23 October 1894, Hagenauer sent Emily Brindle two further orders for rations, stating that these were the last rations she and her family would receive. She and her family would have to take care of themselves. They were not permitted to obtain supplies from Mr Bulmer at Lake Tyers⁴⁷⁴

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Emily Brindle, a/c Bulmer Esqr,
Lake Tyers, 28 November, 1894⁴⁷⁵*

My dear Mrs Brindle

I received your letter in due time asking for another month's supplies and also for permission to live at one of the stations during the winter. I am very sorry to state that I have no power at all to assist you as the law is entirely against your application. I will do all I can for you in the matter and when I have an answer from the Board will let you know the result. You know that in your case so many exceptions have been made that the other many half castes like the Thorps, the Georges and especially the Taylors would cry out against it. I think your Jimmy should go with you to New South Wales, where you would get Government help, because they have no law like ours.

I will let you know in due time
with best wishes
F. A. Hagenauer

Bessie Rawlings

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessie Rawlings, Framlingham,
20 November, 1891⁴⁷⁶*

Mrs Bessie Rawlings

In answer to your letter, asking if you and your husband and family could...live in the house, which was occupied by the family Ross, I may state that I will gladly give that permission and I am sure the Board will also allow it, provided the Rosses do not come back again and also, that the other blacks do not object to it. I think it would be well, if you speak with Mr & Mrs Good about it.

With best wishes

yours truly

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs. B. Rawlings,
Framlingham, 26 May, 1892⁴⁷⁷*

My dear friend

I duly received your letter of the 16th instant asking that clothes may be granted to your son etc. Of course, if that was in my power I would do so at once, but as it is I must bring the application before the Board and if it can be granted I will send it and let you know of it in due time, but if it cannot be granted I will not write on the subject again.

As there have again come serious complaints to this office about a number of half castes being unlawfully at Framlingham I expect that the Government will take strong steps to stop it.

With best regards

faithfully yours

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Bessie Rawlings,
Framlingham, 31 May, 1892⁴⁷⁸*

My dear friend

I am very glad to be able to let you know that I have obtained permission for the supply of a set of clothes for your son in accordance with your application of the 16th instant, but I am also to state that the Board cannot grant more in future.

If you will send me a letter and give the sizes of clothes and boots and hat I will get them made at once and the parcel to Warrnambool, where the young man could fetch them.

I am glad you get them especially when all expenses must be reduced. The Board will soon have to stop the beef for paying so much money to Mr Woodward to catch the rabbits.

With best wishes

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs B. Rawlings, Framlingham,
8 June, 1892⁴⁷⁹*

Dear friend

I am happy to inform you that instruction was given to send your son's clothes at once, to Warrnambool. The parcel is addressed to yourself and you can get it at the station master's office after tomorrow. If you do not go in yourself you would have to send an order so that your son may get it.

Of course, you will note that the Board made an exception this time, but that it cannot be given any longer.

With best wishes,

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

Report of recent meeting of BPA: The Age, 9 June, 1893⁴⁸⁰

The secretary reported that correct information had been obtained with regard to the coloured man Rawlings at present at Framlingham....The man Rawlings had a wife and children, but would do no work and was constantly drinking. The board decided to punish the man by stopping his rations for a month or two, and so make him work for his living.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Rawlings, Framlingham,
10 April, 1895⁴⁸¹*

Memo

If you will send me the numbers of clothes for old Willmott & I will do my best to send them to him, also the blankets for him.

F. A. Hagenauer

*Bessie Rawlings, Purnim, to Mr Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
29 March, 1906⁴⁸²*

Dear Sir, Just a few lines to you telling you I am sorry that I did not see you when you came to the station to take the measurement of our things[;] so I thought I would write & ask you if you will sir be so kind as to send me all [?] piece to make up for my self to my own fit as the skirt was too tight in the waist and round the hips & a little too short in length & the bodice was too short in the back[;] so you see sir they weren't of much use to me though I had squeeze in them & be thankfull of them[;] trusting you will oblige me dear sir & the size of my boot is six & the size of Rawlings is eight. Hoping this short note will reach you in the best of health, as it leaves us not altogether well.

I am your humble servant Bessie Rawlings

During the First World War Bessie's son William enlisted in the AIF and she received a military allotment. In early 1918 the BPA requested the Defence Department to suspend payment of allotments to

Aborigines and to hold the pay in trust instead until the men returned from the war. The Board's logic was that those receiving the allotments were squandering the money.

*W. Johnstone, local guardian, Framlingham, to Minister of Defence,
5 May, 1918⁴⁸³*

Dear Sir

I am surprised at the stopping of payment of Wm Reginald Rawlings, Private, soldier, at the front, to his mother Bessie Rawlings receiving his pay, the reason given is reported misuse of allotment[.] I can certify as their local guardian appointed by the Board for Protection of Aborigines, and knowing Bessie Rawlings for over forty years[;] she never spends one shilling foolishly. She is a good living and respectable woman. As their guardian I will be glad to answer any officer any questions they might want ventilated or Mrs Rawlings would meet any officer and answer any questions they would like to answer. Mr Hall our Purnim Justice of the Peace will also testify to her good character and to her economy in spending the money. This is the only son she has and was her only support and this is the only money she receives except rations which I allot her every week. I am sure if her son hears of it he will be very very sorry. Will you kindly write me and let me know who reported her as there are two half cast women who are envious and jealous women.

Yours sincerely
(SGD) WM. W. Johnstone

In view of Mr Johnstone's opinion the Board decided to allow the resumption of Bessie's allotment.

Bessie Rawlings, Purnim, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 27 June, 1918⁴⁸⁴

To Mr Parker

this just a few lines to let you know that I havent received my military pay yet[;] Mr Johnstone read your letter to him about you sir writing to the pay master to forward my pay to me but it has not come yet[;] so I wrote to the pay master & I told him to send my pay on to purnim instead of banking it for I can do that much myself as I ave got my own bank pass book[;] you know sir that what little rations I get from the Board is not the worth of my dear only son's life of which he as gone to give up for king & freedom. so dear Mr Parker do please see that I get my pay[;] for you know sir that every mother's heart is with her son[;] my thought is always with my own. god bless our boys at the front[.] Kindly oblige your humble servant

Bessie Rawlings
please excuse bad writing & scanty bit of paper

Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Bessie Rawlings, Purnim, 2 July, 1918⁴⁸⁵

Madam,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th instant relative to the resumption of the Military Allotment in your case, and in reply am directed to inform you that this Board has recommended same to the Defence Department.

Yours faithfully
Secretary

Bessy Cameron

BPA, Minutes, 7 September, 1892⁴⁸⁶

Bessie Cameron, at Bairnsdale, applied for 3 months ration to be granted to her at her present residence. As this application would open a new depot & would soon be followed by other Blacks, the request could not be granted.

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Bessy Cameron, Bairnsdale, 12 July, 1893⁴⁸⁷

My dear Mrs. Cameron,

I duly received your letter of the 10th instant and forward pass for you and Haynes.

I will leave the orders here for Haynes clothes, so that when you come to Melbourne Mr. Ditchburn will get the outfit. I think if you could come on Friday morning it would be best, as I shall be back from Warrnambool by that time and go to get the things myself.

There will also be here at the office your return pass to Gippsland
Kindest wishes to you & Haynes

F. A. Hagenauer

Eliza Saunders

Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Saunders, Colac, 1 June, 1893⁴⁸⁸

My dear friend

I have duly received your letter asking for some assistance in rations, which I will bring under the notice of the Board in the hope that at least for a few months you may receive some help. Will you by return of post give me the name and address of a good storekeeper at Colac, so that if your petition is granted I may send an order to him.

You should never state in an application that others receive supplies, for each case the Board considers separately. Mrs Cousins rations are now stopped. Mrs Austin is ill.

With best wishes
yours truly
F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Eliza Saunders, Elliminyt,
6 June, 1894⁴⁸⁹*

My dear friend

I enclose you a letter for Mrs Wilson at Elliminyt which you give to her and I also enclose her ration orders and if you take the ones marked in blue circle you will receive the rations stated thereon. Mrs Wilson must keep that order, which you have to sign and by and by in three months, she must send all orders with the account to me. When 14 days are gone you take the order and again get the same amount and sign for it. Please give the enclosed letter to Mrs Wilson.

With best wishes,

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Saunders, Purnim,
2 August, 1894⁴⁹⁰*

Madam

Your letter of the 28th of July was duly received and considered by the Board for Protection of Aborigines at yesterday's meeting and I have to inform you, that the white woman, who is trespassing at the reserve at Framlingham will be prevented by law at once, for she has no right to be there.

I am much pleased to convey to you the Board's direction regarding your application that as you cannot go and live at Framlingham the Board will allow you for the time being rations and clothes provided you will live with your daughter on the Colac reserve or at one of the established stations which you may choose to select. Kindly let me know of that. I would also feel obliged if you will let me know where is your husband from whom you got your child and if he is doing anything for you

With best wishes

Yours truly

F. A. Hagenauer

*Eliza Saunders, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
28 April, 1913⁴⁹¹*

Dear Sir

when I sent the measure for the skirt and blouse I was sorry afterwards I never put a note in it to thank you[;] please Mr Ditchburn I would sooner have the robe[;] it is easayer to put on and take of[.] I would like the skirt of it wide on account of my leges been doubled up and please Mr Ditchburn while Im writing this note to you I want to ask you if you woudnt mind mind me sometimes changing my rice and oatmeal for cocoa or sago when I take a fancy to it[;] that is if it wont make any difference to you[.] Im not like when you last saw me Mr Ditchburn[;] I am getting weak[.] I often wish for change of

nourishment[;] if you can possibly do it you will oblige me very much[.]
I remain your faithful servant

Eliza Saunders

Maggie Bryant

*Maggie Bryant, McLeod St, Bairnsdale, to Mr Hagenauer, Secretary,
BPA, 29 September, 1893⁴⁹²*

Dear Sir

I am writting to ask you if I can get some more ration as I have no money to get some, and that I am finishing the last, also I have been laid up in bed with a mishap and is getting better. My husband is not home yet; I hope you are keeping well,

I remain

yours truly

Maggie Bryant

The Board granted Maggie two weeks' rations.

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Maggie Bryant, Bairnsdale,
31 January, 1894⁴⁹³*

My dear friend

The letter you sent to Mrs. Hagenauer asking for permission to live for sometime at Ramahyuck has been handed to me, and this morning I referred it to the Board and after consideration of the letter, I am sorry to inform you that the petition cannot be granted. It is not lawful to do so, and it would also be quite unfair to the others not to be allowed to go to the stations. There is already one of your children there under a certificate but no more can come. You are young and must do your best to earn your living in case your husband does not or will not care for you. I wish only in conclusion to say, that you must not try and go to Ramahyuck as you really would come into great trouble

With kindest wishes

Yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer
Secretary

Agnes McCreddie

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Agnes [Mc]Creddie, Ramahyuck,
14 April, 1894⁴⁹⁴*

Madam

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd inst and in reply beg to state that the letter was considered by the Board at this day's meeting and after much deliberation the Board were of opinion that they would not be justified in assenting to

your application either to go to Condah or for the issue of railway passes

I have the honor to be
Your obedt servant
W. Ditchburn

In 1918 Agnes was living at Lindenow South. She appears to have worked as a midwife at times for the women at Lake Tyers.

*Agnes McCreddie, Lindenow South, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
5 March, 1918*⁴⁹⁵

Mr Parker

Sir

I'm very sorry to have kept you waiting for a reply to your letter, being away down at the Lakes when it arrived. I will attend Mrs Darby at the same rate, when ever I am needed

I remain
yours obediently
Agnes McCreddie

*Agnes McCreddie, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ferguson, manager, Lake Tyers,
24 June, 1919*⁴⁹⁶

Sir

I have been suffering for a long time with ill-health. I have been to several doctors, and they tell me that I wont get better until, I get a set of teeth, as indigestion is one of the complaints, would you kindly place my request before the board please,

I am
your humble servant
Agnes McCreddie

Mr Ferguson forwarded Agnes' request with his recommendation that it be approved.

Jennie Rowan

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs Jenny Rowan, Maloga,
8 June, 1894*⁴⁹⁷

Madam

I duly received your letter asking for some clothes and I have asked the Board for it. There seems great difficulty to send anything to New South Wales, but I am happy to say that you shall get a lot of nice things in a day or two. You will have to get it from the Stationmaster at Echuca on Monday or Tuesday. I suppose Sam Rowan will go home to

you and I hope you and he will do well in future. Could you send Tom Smyth things from [?] to Healesville

yours faithfully

F. A. Hagenauer

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Jenny Rowan, Maloga,
20 June, 1894⁴⁹⁸*

Madam

I received your letter of the 10th instant and am glad you got the clothes I sent to you, but I am sorry that I cannot do so for Sam Rowan for he left this Colony long ago stating that he would go and remain in New South Wales....He must just work or remain at the station where he went after he left Victoria[.] I wish also to state that the Government have taken half the Corranderrk land away because you and the others had left for good for New South Wales and now I do not see how any can return to that station, because it is now very small....

Annie McDonald

*Annie & Alfred McDonald, Dunmore, to Rev. Stähle, Lake Condah,
30 June, 1894⁴⁹⁹*

Dear Mr Stähle

As my husband Alfred is out of work just now we find it very hard to get food for ourselves & our 6 children[.] so I write to you asking you whether you would be so good as to write to Mr Hagenauer for me to ask the Aboriginal Board whether they would be so good as to give us some help till the worst of the winter is over & my husband can manage to find some regular work.

If you will kindly do this we will be very thankfull

We are dear Mr Stähle

Yours respectfully

Annie & Alf. McDonald

Stähle forwarded the McDonalds' letter to the Board stating that it would be a 'very merciful act' if the Board were to give them some assistance but that 'in order that McDonald may not imagine that the help for his family means complete [?] to care for him, I would suggest half rations should be granted that he may, like James Lovett, set to work to earn whatever he can by rabbiting on the Station Reserve.

In 1896 Annie asked for more help from the Board (this letter is not in the archives).

*Rev. Stähle, Lake Condah, to Mr Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
20 April, 1896⁵⁰⁰*

Alfred McDonald does not deserve anything but I feel sorry if his wife & children should have to suffer on his account & if you can do

anything for them I will be glad for their sakes. Annie McDonald is a good Christian woman & any help given to her would be a special cause of thankfulness to her.

*Annie MacDonald, Dunmore, to Mr Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
25 May, 1896⁵⁰¹*

Sir

I now write to thank you very heartily for the clothes you sent me, and which I have received this day from Mr Stahle.

They (the clothes) are very acceptable, and I shall always feel grateful to you for your kindness. Again thanking you very heartily.

I am

Yours most respectfully

(Mrs) Annie MacDonald

Annie Manton

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Annie Manton, Echuca,
7 July, 1894⁵⁰²*

I have considered your letter with great sympathy and asked the board to grant your petition. It is a great pity that you ever went away from Coranderrk because when so many had left, the Government took away much of the land in use. I think I will soon come up to Echuca and see you and also Jenny Rowan.

I will send you 3 double blankets on Monday [?] and you must let me know when you get them....

With best compliments

F. A. Hagenauer

Annie Manton, Coranderrk, to Mrs Anne Bon, BPA, 20 March, 1917⁵⁰³

My dear friend Mrs Bon,

Just a short note to let you know that I am in trouble; I lost my little granddaughter[;] she is 5 year old & dear Miss Bon I want you to send me some black stuff making of skirt & blouse & I want one for Maryann because its her little daughter that passed away. She was paralised & always taking fits. It was the fit & whooping cough that took her off. But I suppose it was the Lord's wish to take her away, because she was always suffering from when she was a baby. Its a blessings that she is taken[.] But for all that we do miss her very much & we do feel it too, we are fretting every day[;] it was so sudden for our little lamb to taken from us & after Easter if God's willing for us to live we want to go for a holiday & I want you to get a pass for us. So dear Miss Bon would you mind sending the black stuff for Mary ann & myself as we have no money to buy any & a black suit for Maryann husband size 6, we did not get our winter clothes yet. We have not much news as we are in sadness of our lost little lamb. So I will close

with love & kisses to you from all old friends here. All children has
whooping cough here just at present

So I will close with love to you

from yours truly old friend

Annie Manton

Anne Bon, BPA, to Mr Callaway, BPA, 25 March, 1917

Dear Mr Callaway,

The writer of the enclosed letter is a respectable & deserving woman, and I hope you will comfort her by granting her humble request viz a black dress for herself & daughter. Should you deem it [?] to supply a black suit for the father you might provide a black band for his hat & coat sleeve. The child has suffered from paralysis from her birth but they were so devotedly attached to her they declined to place her in any hospital, and it is a blessing that God in His Mercy has been pleased to take her to himself.

Annie's request was granted.

Eda Brangy

*Friedrich Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA, to Miss Ada [Eda] Brangy, Maloga,
8 May, 1895⁵⁰⁴*

Madam

In answer to your letter of the 7th instant, asking for clothes from this Board I have to state that your wishes cannot be granted.

I have the honor to be

Madam

Your obedient Servant

F. A. Hagenauer

Lizzie Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary,
18 May, 1904⁵⁰⁵*

Dear Sir I now write you a few lines hoping you will try & help me[.] I am greatly in need of clothes & rations for winter[.] I would not ask you but really you can come & see for yourself[.] My bedclothes is thread bare[.] I asked Mr Hagenauer last year for help & he came & saw what I wanted & when he went back he said some one wrote & told the board we were leaving this ground which was falsehood[;] we sold our new room we put up to buy food for winter & to pay a little debt we owed[;] dear Mr Murray I ask you as a friend which you have always been to the Framlingham people & has always helped them[.] I ask you to do your best for me[;] my children clothes is threadbare & they have to go to school half freezed[;] when the board placed us here at first they gave us nothing that would help us[;] we had to struggle & it

has made it so hard for us[;] now we want cows or wires for fencing that we can either milk or grow something but everything my husband earns he has to buy food[;] its caused us so much debt & we must pay it little by little so if you would try your best for me for the winter[;] you may come & see for yourself & I could show you my bedclothes which of course I showed them to Mr Hagenauer when he came & he knows himself I need the help[;] so if you & him would speak for me I would feel very grateful[;] if the board knew I am in greatly need of the rations & clothes they would give my husband the chance to pay our debts up[;] dear Mr Murray I ask you to try your best[.] I was advised to write & ask you to try for a little help for me for the winter[;] trusting in God that he will open the hearts of those that are able to grant me & my family a little help[;] if I can get this winters supply I will never ask again

yours truly friend
Mrs Joseph Crough
Elliminyt P.O.

P.S. You wont delay in trying your best as I am badly in need of what I have asked for

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
July, 1905⁵⁰⁶*

Dear Sir

I now write to you a few lines hoping it will find you quite well as it leaves my family well but I dont feel well myself[;] dear Mr Hagenauer I am now writing to once more to grant me a little help for the winter[;] we are nearly starved[.] Mr Hagenauer we are so much in debt that we cannot buy enough food[.] I have been fined for my children not attending school & the reason is they never had enough food to be kept going[;] dear Mr Hagenauer try & get me a supply[;] we cannot afford to buy food & clothing this winter[;] the ones going to school now is nearly barefooted & thin clothes on them[;] cetainly you gave my daughter a supply I dont mean her[;] its the two boys[;] one is 10 years the other is 7[;] dear Mr Hagenauer I cannot see why the board dont give my family a little supply if its only once in 100 years[;] they grant to other families that ought not to get it[;] if I dont get any I will write my complaint to My Murray & he will fight for a little help for me[.] I will tell him the board placed us here in the beginning & gave us no start of any kind[;] we had to struggle even for our clothes all along[.] I often think of it now[;] if they would have started us with a little help for couple of years we may have done better such as given us seed or a plough to start the ground with we may have been in pocket[;] dear Mr Hagenauer you can come & see the state of me & my children clothes & Joes & our blankets[;] it would make you sorry I sure Mr Hagenauer because I know you are very feeling[.] I know you will plad to the board for me for a supply of clothes & ration[;] if they wont grant the

clothes I hope they will the rations but I greatly need bothe for the winter is very bleak & cold here at present[.] I cry of a morning when my poor children who face the school thinly clad outside & also some morning a very poor breakfast[.] I hope that God will soften their hearts Mr Hagenauer towards me & my children for the winter[;] you have always done your utmost for me[;] if you cant then I will try Mr Murray but I trust you will do you very best for me[.] Mr Hagenauer I never ask the board only when I see I am completely in a starving position[;] of course Joe has been doing a little among the horses but the creditors wants it as fast as its made because we have been running up bills all the winter last year & owing to sickness myself for the doctor & also loosing a little baby & the expense for the burial[.] I hope they wont be hard[;] trusting in God it will be granted to me[;] my heart would rejoice if its granted to me[.] Mr Hagenauer I also will thank you[;] I now close

with fond wishes

yours truly L. Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
October, 1905⁵⁰⁷*

Dear friend

I now write a few lines to you again to tell you that poor Joe has gone back to the hospital again[;] he was home for a while but made no progress & the doctor said he was to go back so as the doctor could attend to him with medical treatment[;] dear Mr Hagenauer I feel it very hard to be as I am & my husband sick[.] I hope the board will allow me the provisions & a little meat till he is able to earn[;] if only I had about 3 cows it would help me but you know I cant get them[.] I am very thankful which I have received already from the board[;] dear Mr Hagenauer I now draw to a close hoping to hear from you soon[;] if the meat ticket is alowed to me you might kindly send it to Mr Bilson & Lucas butchers & they will deliver the meat to me

with kind regards

from L. Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
April, 1907⁵⁰⁸*

Mr Ditchburn

I now write a few lines to you as I do not know the gentleman name that is in Mr Hagenauers place now but you can tell him my position for me[.] I want you to remind him of clothes for my husband myself & children & also blankets[;] tell him my husband is unable to work yet & we need the clothing & blankets badly for the winter[.] I am sure we are both very thankful to the board for their kindness to us during my husbands long illness & I hope that they will grant me clothing & I will

hope & trust for it to be granted[;]
you will kindly let me know again
yours etc

L Crough

The Board asked the Colac police to report on Mrs Crough's situation. The local police constable reported that he had visited Mrs Crough and found her in a 'half naked condition' and living in squalid conditions. Her husband Joseph, a horsebreaker, was unable to work owing to a lung complaint.

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
May, 1908⁵⁰⁹*

Dear Sir

I am writing you a few lines to ask you a favour as I am in need of it[;] you have always obliged me when I have asked for anything when I need it[.] I never ask till I do[;] see I greatly need it[;] dear Mr Ditchburn I want to know if you can get me a supply of rations till the winter is over[;] my too children is earning but its just enough to keep themselves[.] I cant ask them for any more[;] they give me a little now & then but it just pays a little odds I owe at the store[;] dear Mr Ditchburn do try your best for me[;] I want it badly[;] our potatoes were a failure[;] if you will be able to get me a supply I want you to let Mr Airey at Elliminyt serve me the ticket as it is the store[.] I get a little from now & again[.] I trust in God he will open your heart to grant me the provisions

your obed

L Crough

I will keep it to myself if it granted

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
21 July, 1909⁵¹⁰*

Dear Mr Ditchburn

I am writing to thank you for the rations the board has granted me[.] I am very grateful to you for trying your best for me[;] dear Mr Ditchburn I want you to try & get me a too month supply just over the winter to give Joe a chance[;] he cannot do anything for the next too months & another thing he has no boots[;] please Mr Ditchburn do try your best & I want to know when you are sending me the next ticket[;] could you allow me the flour[;] dear Mr Ditchburn you will kindly do your best for me for the next supply[;] hoping to hear from you

yours truly

L Crough

On 24 July, 1909, the Colac Ladies Benevolent Society wrote to the BPA stating that it had visited the Crough family and found them in very poor circumstances. The Society recommended that the Board supply

the Croughs with the same rations that the Board gave to 'full blacks'.⁵¹¹

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
26 July, 1909⁵¹²*

Dear Sir I now write you these few lines hoping will reach you in health as it leaves my family the same but Joe cough is a little troublesome now & again[;] now Mr Ditchburn I am in great difficult at the present[.] I am writing to you this letter to ask you to grant me a favour[.] I want to know if you can get me a pass for myself & too children to take me to Coranderrk to be confined[.] I expect the middle of next month[.] I would not ask you for a pass but I would not have to pay the nurse there because Mrs Gibbs would help me[;] the crop Joe put in was a failure & this year he is putting in more onions & potatoes to see if it will prove better & to pay for the onions & potatoes seed. I have no means in any way to pay a European woman[.] I would like for you to try your best for me Mr Ditchburn & let me know if you can get me the pass to go there[;] I wont let any one know because I know several has asked for passes[.] I will keep it to myself & so I hope that the board will grant me a pass to go there[;] as you know Mr Ditchburn its a necessity case[.] I do hope & trust in God to open their hearts to help me as I cannot get help any other way[;] trusting to hear from you as soon as possible & if it should be granted to me to give me time to prepare[;] with kind regards from Joe & myself yours truly

L Crough

The Board replied to Lizzie that her family would receive rations until the end of September, and that instead of her going to Coranderrk, the Board would ask the Colac Ladies Benevolent Society to help with her confinement.

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
June, 1910⁵¹³*

Sir I now write you a few lines hoping will reach you in the best of health as I am most happy to say it leaves me & the rest quite well[.] I am glad to say I feel stronger & I am home with my baby from Warrnambool[.] I am writing for you to grant me a favour if you can get it & that is clothes & blankets for me & my husband & my boy Kenneth[;] he is at home with me & I cannot spare him just for a while[;] do try your best as I need the clothes & boots & blankets badly & allow something extra for my little baby & little girl 3 year old & mother wishes me to tell you she has not got her clothes yet & she wants them badly[;] we have called every day since she got your letter & they have not come[;] dear Mr Ditchburn do try & get this supply as we have nothing warm[;]... I am also asking you to do me a favour if you can & that is to go to where my daughter works & tell her for me to come home & you give her a certain time to come home[.] I have

written to her to come home & she never came so I ask you to try as I can do with her help for a while[;] her adress is 81 Victoria Avenue Albert Park c/o Mrs Treezise[;] if she has no money to come try & give her a pass home[.] I dont want her any longer in Melbourne[.] I now must close[;] hoping you will do your best for my in both favours with kind respects

yours truly
L Crough

also I never heard how my children is at Mrs Gibbs[.] I have written 2 or 3 letters to her & got no answer

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
12 June, 1910⁵¹⁴*

Dear Sir your letter I received the other day & was very gld to read my favour was granted[.] I do feel very thankful to you & the board[;] also dear Mr Ditchburn I want a supply of blankets & a cheap quilt for my bed & I would like for you to send me loose dress stuff & a bit of dress plad for the girls & a petticoat & some flannell & towels & cotton & needles & some calico & chemises & also for the too little ones little baby boy & girl I have send me 2 nice little tarrashanta caps & of course you know I have not brought my little ones from Coranderrk yet[.] I want to leave them there till the winter is over so I suppose you have given them theirs there which I hope so but I want you to give me a supply for my second eldest boy Ken the boy that was here when you came last as he has had to be home with me since I been back from the hospital & I have no one now to help me only him[;] so kindly send me a suit no. 1 for him & a couple of shirts & a pair of boots small 7 & stockings & a couple of under flannel shirts for him hat or cap no. 652 And Joe suit no. 4 & boots size 6 hat 658 shirts & under flannel shirts & socks

& my boots no. 6 & little girls 4 years old no. 7 & socks for the little girl & so dear Mr Ditchburn I feel so thankful and could you send me the making of 2 bed ticking & a bit of cheap forfar[;] so I hope you will send them for me as soon as possible as I want warm clothes badly[;] I am nearly perished[;] also we have mothers parcel[.] I now close[.] there is one thing I asked you to do for me but I was sorry to trouble you as if I had waited I heard from my daughter & she left the place I told you to go but she will be coming home as soon as she earns her train fare but you can call & see her if you have time & tell her to come home to me & let me know how she looks[;] this is where she is at the present Alberta 26 Henry St Northcote[.] I wish you could send her home to me at once as I want her at home[.] I now close

with kind regards from
all yours truly
L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
15 March, 1911*⁵¹⁵

Dear Sir

....I am going to ask you if you could get me an allowance of meat as I am mostly getting a bit of mothers from her[;] dear Mr Ditchburn kindly do your best for me & I will be very thankful to you

yours L Crough
reply soon

Ditchburn replied that the meat supply could not be allowed as it was not the practice of the Board to supply 'half caste' people with meat.

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
31 October, 1911*⁵¹⁶

Sir I have the honour to thank you & the board for the nice print I have received on the 30th also the nice suit for my little boy[;] dear Mr Ditchburn I want to ask you to do me one more favour as to help Joe[;] he has put up 2 small rooms at the back of the old place & he took sick & could not earn to finish it & all he wants for it is the roofing & the flooring boards hard boards & a few bricks for a small chimney[;]

dear Mr Ditchburn try your best & get the board to grant it as we need a new place badly[;] our place is not fit to live in & its too small[.] I hope you will do your best for me & ask Joe to give you the sizes of the [?] iron if you succeed[;] oblige me with

kind regards from us all
L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
29 May, 1912*⁵¹⁷

Mr Ditchburn

I now write you a few lines to let you know the kitchen is finished all but to line it & paper it but we are using it now & I am sorry to have you waiting so long for an answer but hope you will excuse me[.] I wish the board would grant me a second hand tank to catch the water & also spouting all round[.] I now close with kind regards

yours truly L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, July, 1912*⁵¹⁸

Dear Sir I am writing to once more for a favour & I wont trouble you any more unless its great necessity[;] the board has been very kind in giving us what I have already asked for & I want to know if they would grant me a large iron tank as I have only a small bowl[;] also Mrs Saunders wishes me to remind you of the one you promised some time ago[;] all the water is running under her house[;] dear Sir try & do

your best for me[;] trusting it will be granted
your obedient
L Crough

The Board sent a tank for the Croughs.

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
23 October, 1912⁵¹⁹*

Dear Sir In reply to your kind letter asking me for which I will choose I would rather choose light print for a change as it will be warm weather[.] I am very thankful to you for your kind thoughts & also to the board[.] I am sure I feel very grateful[.] I must also ask you if you could kindly get me a large or small cheap dresser for my kitchen[.] I have only a little old one & it makes the place look shabby as I have no furniture at all not even a kitchen sofa[.] Joe is trying to do a little shearing this year but he cant do much as he is just trying it this year to see if he can keep it up & next year if he is right he will try a big shed & then perhaps we will be able to get some more things that we want for our place to furnish our place & could you kindly get me a cheap three quarter bed & mattress for the children[;] if you do that for me I will be very grateful to the board[;] trusting you will kindly let me know

oblige your humble
servant L Crough

The Board sent a kitchen safe, three chairs, a bedstead and mattress.

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
December, 1912⁵²⁰*

Dear Mr Ditchburn

I am sorry to have not let you know sooner[;] you will excuse me[.] I hope you wont think I am ungrateful[.] I have received the parcels quite safe & am very much pleased with the print[;] also Mrs Saunders is very pleased with her wrapper[.] I am also pleased with the chairs & safe & bedstead you got granted to me[.] I must now close wishing you a merry xmas & a happy new year with best regard your humble

servant L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
April, 1913⁵²¹*

Dear Sir I am writing to you a few lines hoping will reach you in best of health as it leaves myself & family the same. Dear Sir I am writing asking you to kindly shift the tickets for us to the corner store Mr Airey & also would you try & get the board to grant me extra more sugar as when I use up the oatmeal & rice I am out of sugar before the next

ticket will come[;] also ask the board to allow me a meat ticket[;] its too dear for me to buy for all my children & I think as all the others get meat they may as well allow me some too[;] dear Mr Ditchburn kindly try your best for the meat ticket & to shift the ration ticket & I would be kindly oblige to you if you possibly do your best[;] your humble servant

L. Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
3 August, 1913⁵²²*

Mr Ditchburn

I am sorry to have you waiting so long[.] I hope you wont think I forgot about it but owing to my poor sisters death I did forget[;] she was only ill 9 days so you will excuse me[;] also my little boy was in the hospital too & I am most thankful to the board & you for what I recived[;] dear Mr Ditchburn I am going to ask you would you send me four yards of very fine flannel & 1 chemise & 1 nightdress & a under petticoat for myself as I used the calico for the little ones & I expect to be laid up end of this month & I am very miserable[;] also a black loose wrapper[;] if you could get those for me I will be very thankful to you for them[.] I now close trusting you will try your best to get me those articles as I am badly need them

with best
respects from all
L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
September, 1913⁵²³*

Dear Sir

Your kind letter to hand I received Saturday & was very pleased to receive another order stating me to choose wether I would like the print or material[.] Please Mr Ditchburn I would very much like a dark print for the little ones & a very dark material[;] of course you know I am not out of dark yet on account of my dear sisters death so I would be very much obliged to you if you kindly send me dark black for my self[.] I will make it up myself as I have a machine[.] I feel very grateful to you for your kindness to me[;]

hoping to hear from you shortly

yours truly
L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
31 January, 1916⁵²⁴*

Mr Ditchburn

I now write to ask you if you could kindly forward my ration ticket[.] I must say I was made very comfortable by Mr & Mrs Galbraith

& found mother well & also enjoyed our Xmas[.] I liked them both very much so I hope you will oblige me with the ticket
with best respects
Lizzie Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
7 May, 1916⁵²⁵*

Sir in reply to your order I received asking what I needed particular I need our under clothing badly such as chemises & nightdresses & the blankets & some warm dress material for the children & flannel & a few yards of boys tweed to make up for my too little boys[;] one is too years old & the other is 6 years[;] hoping you will be able to grant me these few things[.] I will be thankful to the board
L. Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
18 June, 1916⁵²⁶*

Sir I received the parcel Saturday & I appreciate the blankets very much[.] I am very thankful to you & the board for the little I am receiving as need them very much[;] hoping to soon receive the other items
thanking you for your kindness
your obedient
L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
September, 1916⁵²⁷*

I am sorry I have kept you waiting[.] I am thankful for the nice warm clothing I got from the board[;] trusting to receive my ration ticket[;] everything is dear since the war began & it makes it hard for poor people
trusting you will oblige
L Crough

The Board gave permission for the Croughs to visit Lizzie's mother Eliza Saunders at Lake Condah for one month over the Christmas period.

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
7 December, 1916⁵²⁸*

Mr Ditchburn,

I now write you a few lines to ask you if you could allow my next ticket to due here by Thursday as we are expecting to leave saturday the 16th[;] would you be kind enough as to send word to Mrs Galbraith Lake Condah Mission Station stating we are coming so as to

give them time to get prepared[.] I now close hoping to hear from you
also wishing you a merry xmas & a happy New Year
your truly
L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
16 December, 1916⁵²⁹*

Sir I am writing to thank the board for been kind as to send the too
pairs of boots which I appreciated very much[;] wishing you will
forward my ticket on

wishing you a merry xmas & a happy new year
yours truly
L Crough

Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Secretary, BPA, 7 July, 1917⁵³⁰

Dear Sir

I am writing to thank the board for the warm winter clothing
they have been kind enough to send me[.] I must say that I received
the parcel in good order.

with best respects
yours truly
L Crough

*Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
1 February, 1918⁵³¹*

Mr Parker

Sir I am writing to ask you to see & shift my goods to Bilson as I
am not satisfied with it at Elliminyt[;] its not convenient & another
thing they...sometimes cannot give the sugar at once & the last ticket I
sent over there was 24 [lbs] sugar to come & they only gave me 18 lb &
kept the other 6lb so I thought I better complain to you as the board
will have to pay & I never got the first amount of sugar[;] so kindly
report it to them to give the 6 lb[.] I would not ask for it if it was not
owing[;] with kind regards

I am enclosing you an order of
how I received the goods from
Mr Bilson
shop & no trouble

your humble
servant
L Crough

another thing I only receive one bar of soap & I got too from Mr Bilson

Lizzie Crough, Elliminyt, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 17 April, 1922⁵³²

Mr Parker

Sir I write you a few lines to ask you to grant me a favour from
the Board[.] I am very much in need of some clothing for myself &

children that going to school[;] also blankets[.] I cant see my way clear to buy any as it to dear & my husband is not been in good health so I would like you to do your best for me[;] we have not a second change to put on[.] I never ask only when I am in need of it[;] so I trust you will oblige me with it[.] I have three children going to school & one has just left[;] also could you get me a supply of rations for about 3 months now[.] I trust you will do your best for me[.]

trusting to hear from you as soon as possible[.] I will thank you very much as I think the board ought to help a little when times are hard

yours truly
L. Crough

Amelia Rose

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Hagenauer, Secretary, BPA,
September, 1906*⁵³³

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to thank you for your kindness in allowing us rations while my husband is to ill though he is improving slowly[;] he is in Warrnambool Hospital & I think he will go to Hieldeberg soon as he gets a little stronger[;] also I would like you to thank Mrs Bon for her kindness in taking the trouble to get him into the Heidleberg Hospital[.] Please Mr Hagenauer do you think that you could allow me a few clothes for myself & my children[.] I have four little ones & as my husband has never done any work for eight months we have been unable to get any clothes at all so we are in need of a few[.] I would be very grateful for them if you would allow us a few

I must close

with good wishes

I remain

yours truly

Amelia Rose

Amelia Rose and her children continued to receive rations from the Board during 1906 and 1907 but the Board intended these to cease in August 1907. John Murray, MLA for Warrnambool, and his sister Mary Murray both wrote to the Board asking that the rations to the Rose family continue, explaining that otherwise the family was in danger of starving. Consequently the Board continued to supply rations to Amelia Rose and her children but not to her husband Henry because the Board thought he should be working to support himself and family.⁵³⁴

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 17 May, 1913*⁵³⁵

Dear Sir just a few lines to let you know we received some clothes alright[;] we got all the suits & boots & boys hats & shirts & flannel shirts & 2 girls chemises & 2 girls nightgowns but no loose flannel or

calico & I only got one chemise & dress & petticoat but no loose material for little girls' dresses & no blankets[.] I dont know if that is all we are going to get or not but all the same we are very grateful for it to the Board[.] I have had hard luck since we came home[;] we were all laid up with measles or else I would have written before only for that. Please Mr Ditchburn I want to know if I can get a order from Mr Shoebridge to go to Dr Henderson for treatment as soon as I am strong to go in[.] I have been sick[;] after I have been home little over a fortnight & waiting on the children I got run down properly[.] I am staying at Mrs Goods while I have been ill & she says I want to see the Doctor[;] please telegram to Mr Shoebridge if you will allow me an order[;] thanking you again for clothes & hoping to hear from you soon

I remain
yours truly
Amelia Rose

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
1 November, 1913⁵³⁶*

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to ask you if there is any chance of the Board helping my husband in the way of getting a waggon[;] we have sold some of our young cattle to buy a horse & we want to get a waggon capable of carrying two ton. you know sir that he is not a strong man as Dr Henderson will tell you & not able to do very hard work at any time. so if the Board will kindly see their way clear to help him or even to partly help him to get one we would be very grateful to them & also Mr Ditchburn I have asked Mr Johnson to try & get my father in law John Rose a small tent[;] he has had a bag tent all the winter & the rough weather has blown it to pieces[;] he is a very old man now & wants a little comfort & a tent is better for him in the warm weather but Mr Johnson didnt let us know if he had written for one for him[;] so please will you see about one for him[;] size about 6 x 8[;] I never thanked you for the doctor's order you kindly sent me. I have had bad health this long time[;] we have to pay for my doctor & all the medicine I get[;] the measles have left me very bad health so you see we have extra expense to pay[.] I am still under the doctor yet so I am not able to do any work to help my husband as I have been able to before I got sick[;] I earned 15/- a week washing & cleaning for the white neighbours but now I can just do my own work. so dear sir I hope to hear from you after a while

with all good wishes
I remain
yours truly
Amelia Rose

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, August, 1914*⁵³⁷

Just a few lines to ask the Board to extend our rations for another two months please as work is a bit slack just now till the June weather is [?] & my husband's health is not too good[;] also one of my boys I have had him in the Hospital with a bad arm & its not too well yet[;] thanking the Board for past favours

I remain

yours truly

Amelia Rose

Rations were granted to Amelia and her children until October 1914.

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, April, 1915*⁵³⁸

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to ask the Board if they would allow me double rations for myself & the four children that goes to school. I am not able to keep them as regular at school as I would like as we are having very hard time just now on account of very little work to do[;] hoping that they will grant me this favour. I remain

yours truly

Amelia Rose

The Board granted rations to Amelia and her children until the end of July 1915, at which time Amelia asked Mr Johnstone the local guardian to write to the Board to ask for an extension of rations until September. This request was granted.

*Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 6 May, 1916*⁵³⁹

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to ask the Board if they would allow me a double ration for myself & four children as I am very hard up & the reason is that Harry thinks of nothing else but the drink[.] I wrote to the police Seargeant about him but they sent word out with a constable that they cant do anything to him if he does drink but they told me to apply for rations & see if I could get them & let them know. sometimes we have to go without & its very hard on the children[.] I have to keep them at school regular but the school is closed on account of whooping cough[;] hoping Sir you will do your best & oblige yours truly

Amelia Rose

Mr Johnstone supported Amelia's application and her request was granted. In July he wrote to the Board asking that Amelia and the children be granted rations until the end of September because it was difficult to make money from wood splitting at this time of year. The request was granted.

Amelia Rose, Purnim, to Mr Johnstone, local guardian, August, 1917⁵⁴⁰

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to see if you could write again to the Board & ask them if they would let me & the children have rations till the end of september[.] I wouldnt ask you only that I am real hard up as this weather is against woodcutting[;] they have wood cut but no buyers as the roads are impassable. I have been going out by the day but on account of the water I have to knock off. I have very little in the house as it is & you know we have to pay cash for every bit of food that we get at the store[;] we never get credit as Mr Hall will tell you so himself. so they will be doing us a real kindness in allowing us just for two months as I am in real need of it or I wouldnt ask for help[;] if they cant I will have to go & ask Miss Murray to help me[;] hoping you will do your best for me I remain

yours truly
Amelia Rose

Lucy Pepper

*Lucy Pepper, Greenvale Sanitorium, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
29 January, 1908⁵⁴¹*

To Mr Ditchburn

I write these few lines asking you if you sent me out those things which you said you would as I am in great need of them and would you kindly send me a makintosh out as well and the things must be flannel & oblige

I remain
Mrs Pepper
Greenvale Sanitorium
Broadmeadows

P. S. Could you send it out Thursday or Friday & oblige

LP

[Ditchburn noted on the back of this letter:]

Mrs Pepper called at office on the 5th Feb. 08 and informed me that she had been discharged from the Sanitorium on the previous day I gave her an order for a rail ticket to Sale. 6.2.08

*Lucy Pepper, Cunninghame, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
12 February, 1908⁵⁴²*

Mr Ditchburn

I received the clothes on Monday and I thank you very much for them. Percy is not working yet as his hand broke out again, a piece of bone came out of his finger

I remain

Lucy Pepper

*Lucy Pepper, Hospital Creek, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary,
15 February, 1915⁵⁴³*

Dear Sir

I am writing to you for a little help as I want to leave Gippsland before the winter sets in[.] I have been suffering for this last 7 years with tubical of the left lung & also bleeding lungs & in winter I am subject to hemmerages & the Dr says a change would do me good[.] I would like to go over to the Western District Purnim at Easter[;] once I get over to Purnim I can get a little help with my children[.] I have six & the eldest is only eleven & they cannot do for themselves when I am sick & my husband has to knock of work to look after me & over at Purnim I have relations that would help me a lot[;] my husband is working on the railway line to Orbost but that wont last long & he cannot leave me by myself[.] I am camped out with him[;] as for himself he suffers at times & cannot get full time[;] it is only hand to mouth & we have a very hard struggle to get a living[.] I am compelled to write to ask you if you could give me & family a pass at Easter to go to Purnim[;] both my husband & myself are half cast Aborigines[;] my husband to get work on the railway line over there[;] the police in Cunninghame can let you know what a hard struggle we have with sickness as I never know when I take bad & I dread to stay in Gippsland for the winter as the Dr ordered me away to another climate in winter[;] hoping you will help me & give us a pass[;] trusting to hear from you shortly as I would like to go away at Easter[;] there is always a drawback if my children are not sick I am & oblige

your humble servant

Lucy Pepper

Mr Ditchburn submitted to the Board that it would be better for Lucy to remain near her parents at Cunninghame, and that Percy would not find employment if they were to move to Purnim. 'If these people were in need of food and clothing I would be prepared to grant it but I cannot recommend this request.' The matter was deferred by the Board.

*Lucy Pepper, Hospital Creek, to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary,
10 March, 1915⁵⁴⁴*

Dear Sir

Have you given my case a consideration[;] as I never herd from you I though I would write to you again[;] it is four weeks since I wrote to you[;] hoping you wont over look this letter and I am anxious to get away from Gippsland[.] I am suffering again with my lungs & I would like to get away before the winter set in[.] I would like you to give me a pass to go to Purnim and my husband will try & get on the Hamilton line[.] I also will have help over there with my 6 children as at times I am not able to look after them myself[;] we find things pretty hard & I am sure we will be able to make a do over there[;] we have found

things pretty hard at times[;] when I am bad with my lungs my husband has to stay home and look after me and the children has to go very short of food when their father is not able to go to work[;] trusting you will help us by giving us a pass[.] I would like to go away Easter week

I remain
yours
Lucy Pepper

P. S. I am a half-cast Aboriginal
My Address

Mrs L Pepper
c/o Hospital Creek PO
Via Bruthen

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Lucy Pepper, Hospital Creek,
16 March, 1915⁵⁴⁵*

I am directed to state that if your husband earns enough money to pay your fares to the Western District there is nothing to prevent his spending the money in that way, but, there is no reason why the Government should supply passes as requested.

In November 1915 the Board gave Lucy permission to visit Framlingham for several weeks and granted rations for the duration of her stay. She stayed with Ellen Good.

*Lucy Pepper, Purnim, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
10 December, 1915⁵⁴⁶*

Dear Sir

I am writing to you asking you if you could kindly give me a pass to go home as Percy wont be able to come over & he has not got settled up yet & I must go home so he can go & look for some work[;] the change has done me a lot of good & I thank you very much for helping me over here[.] I would like to stay here as the place agrees with me but I cannot see our way clear of shifting over here so would you kindly give me a pass to go back home again so Percy can go to look for harvesting

I remain
sincere
Lucy Pepper

Later that month the Peppers were living at Lake Condah. Percy was working on the railway line from Heywood and visiting his family at the station on weekends.

*Lucy Pepper, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
29 December, 1915⁵⁴⁷*

Dear Sir

Just a line to let you know we arrived here & thank you very much but there is one thing I would like to mention is I get very little milk & if I do not send the yard I get none at all[;] as the Dr said I ought to get plenty of milk. we are all very bad with the influenza[.] Percy is very ill with it & I want to know if you will let us stay a bit longer till I am a bit stronger & also Percy[;] he feels to weak to start on the line just yet[;] trusting you will let us stay a bit longer

I remain
your sincere
Lucy Pepper

Mr Ditchburn referred the matter to Mr Galbraith, manager of Lake Condah, who replied that he had given permission to the Peppers to stay another week.

*Lucy Pepper, Warrnambool, to Mr McLeod, Chief Secretary,
1 May, 1916⁵⁴⁸*

Mr McLeod

I received a letter from Mr Ditchburn asking me where I wanted to live if a pass was sent to us to go away from here as my husband has inlisted & has to be in camp by the end of the week & I think it is better for me to be at home amongst my own people at Stratford as I am amongst strangers over here[;] hoping to hear from you soon

I remain
sincere
Mrs L Pepper

That month Lucy and her children returned to Gippsland.

Lucy Pepper, Lakes Entrance, to Mr Gray, BPA, 30 April, 1917⁵⁴⁹

Sir

I am writing to you again as I cannot stand the winter here at the Lakes[.] I am not too well just now[.] I would like to get away from here before the very cold weather comes[;] my little boy is not too well either & I think it would save the Dr Bills as I do not get to much to live on. I hope you have not forgotten my case[.] I have been waiting patiently for an answer[;] hoping to hear from you soon[;] is there any land available over at Purnim or around there as Clarks & others have a lot of land & do not make any use of it[.] I would not care if it was only a

acre or 2 to make a home on as the Western District agrees with me[.] I would be very thankful

I remain
yours sincerely
Mrs L Pepper

The Secretary replied to Lucy on 9 May, 1917 that her application had been considered by the Board and could not be granted.

Lucy Pepper, Lakes Entrance, to Mr Gray, BPA, 5 July, 1917⁵⁵⁰

Sir

I am writing to you thanking you for your trouble in trying to get me a piece of land but I think I will have to be content to live here at the Lakes till my husbands return if God spares him to come home. My father has given me a acre of land & I want to know if you could help me with some netting wire for it as I am not fit do much as I have been very ill in Hospital again as the sea air is to strong for me[.] I will always be delicate[;] hoping to hear from you

I remain
yours sincerely
Mrs L. Pepper

The letter was forwarded to Mr Gray by the BPA Secretary, Mr Parker, with the note: 'Mrs Pepper wrote previously desiring a block of ground at Framlingham Reserve. She is in receipt of an allowance from her husband (in A.I.F.) and so without the province of the Board.' Mr Gray asked the Lands Department to help Mrs Pepper with wire sufficient to enclose the acre of land.

Percy Pepper returned from the war at the end of 1918 and the family took up land at Koo-wee-rup in Gippsland.

Susy Murray

*Susy Murray, Lindenow South, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
20 September, 1909⁵⁵¹*

Sir

hoping you will pardon me for again taking the liberty of writing to you but the reason I am writing is to ask you if you would be kind enough to try & get me rations for another three months as Fred is no better[;] in fact he is worse[;] he has not been able to do anything[;] his health is breaking up fast[.] I have no means to get any food & I have two children to send to school[;] if I dont send them I would get a summons & I have nothing to send them with. perhaps when the warm weather comes on he may get a little better & then he able to do something[.] I would not trouble you only there is no work here for me[;] no one close about here that is in a position to give any work[;] all

poor people[.] So I would be so grateful to you if you will try & get me the rations[.] I thank you for your kind help during the winter[.] I dont

I remain your
humble servant
Susy Murray

Susy's request was approved by the Board.

*Susy Murray, Lindenow South, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
28 September, 1909⁵⁵²*

Sir

I received the ticket on saturday & was very pleased[.] I am very grateful to you[;] it will help me a great deal[;] thanking you again for your trouble

I remain your
Humble Servant
Susy Murray

*Susy Murray, Lindenow South, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
17 January, 1913⁵⁵³*

Sir

Just a few lines to let you know that I and my daughter didn't go to Coranderk Mission Station on account of my son Ernie being very ill[;] now that he has past away I would like very much for you to send me my rations the same as before and you will oblige

S. Murray

The Board referred Susy's request to the local police officer at Lindenow, who reported back that he did not think the Murrays should be given assistance because Fred was working at present and their son William, aged 23, could always get work. The Board asked the Murrays to explain why they still required rations.

*Susy Murray, Lindenow South, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
3 March, 1913⁵⁵⁴*

Sir

I received your letter asking why my supplies should be continued. Fred is still bad with the asthma and also inwardly, and cant do heavy work like he use to do, so that we are glad to get a little help. Fred is away just now, trying to get a few skins, so that is the reason that I am writing instead of him[.] Hoping you will do your best for us as you have done in the past.

Your obedient servant
S. Murray

The Secretary replied to Susy that there did not appear to be sufficient justification to grant the request.

Alice Login

*Alice Login, Bairnsdale Hospital, to Captain Howe, manager, Lake Tyers,
22 February, 1910⁵⁵⁵*

Dear Sir

I received your letter and I will stay in a bit longer[.] I am getting on all right[;] its only my legs[;] I cant use them to walk[.] I can move them a little so I think I might get the use of them again but it might be a long time[;] if Im not home when the clothes come please keep my things for me and my children can get theirs[.] I am glad to hear that Mandie is a getting on well[.] I trust and hope she will always be a good girl. please Captain would you send two sheets by for me[.] I only got one last year and none the year before[;] thankyou for your kind advice.

From

Alice Login

*Alice Login, Coranderrk, to Mr Greene, manager, Lake Tyers,
1 August, 1916⁵⁵⁶*

Sir

I am dropping you a few lines hoping it will find you in good health. Well Mr Green why I am writing to you is to ask you if you would kindly send me my wheel as I am in need of it again as I cannot get about on my feet[.] I have lost the use of one leg now & am losing the use of the other[;] so Capt Howe told me that if I was crippled again I had only to send word down for the Chair to be sent up to me[;] that is all I have to write for & trusting to see my old chair sent as soon as possible[;]

I must draw this letter to a close[;] trusting to get a reply

I remain

yours respectfully

Mrs Alice Logan

Coranderrk

Secretary, BPA, to Alice Login, Coranderrk, 15 August, 1916⁵⁵⁷

Memo.

Your letter of the 1st instant, addressed to the Manager at Lake Tyers has been sent to me. You stated that owing to the fact that you 'had lost the use of one of your legs and am losing the use of the other' you were in need of an invalid's chair.

I am informed that your statement is incorrect, as a medical examination showed that with the exception of pregnancy, the doctor was unable to find anything wrong with you. Further that you had not expressed to the Manager at Coranderrk, a wish for an invalid's chair.

Bella McDougall

*Bella McDougall, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
29 November, 1910⁵⁵⁸*

Dear Sir

I wish to apply for a license for myself and two children Mabel, aged 3 years, and Lancelot, aged 5 months. I have resided here all my life, I am married to an aboriginal (John McDougall). My age is 30 years.

Bella McDougall

Bella's application to stay at Lake Tyers was approved. From 1911 to 1917 she periodically applied for a renewal of her license to remain on the station. This was approved each time by the Board.

*Bella McDougall, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ferguson, manager, Lake Tyers,
21 February, 1918⁵⁵⁹*

Dear Sir

Will you kindly favour me your help in asking the Board if Louisa Conolly aged 70 years or more to be allowed to come in the station and remain as a resident of the place. I will be very glad to take her in to my house, provided the application be granted

I am

respectfully yours
Bella McDougall

Louisa was allowed to go to Lake Tyers to stay with Bella.

*Bella McDougall, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ferguson, manager, Lake Tyers,
13 August, 1918⁵⁶⁰*

Dear Sir

I was advised by the Matron to write & ask you, if you could get a nice soft mattress for me, similar to the one you got for Mrs Darby, also like the one Mrs Edwards got too. I am expecting very soon & I would like you to get it as soon as possible.

Hoping you will be able to get it for me, I am yours sincerely

Bella McDougall

Mr Ferguson forwarded this letter to the Board with his recommendation.

Polly Stephen

*Polly Stephen, Lake Tyers, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
June, 1911⁵⁶¹*

Sir

I beg to make application for a renewal of my licence to be allowed to reside on Lake Tyers Station for a further 3 month.

Yours respectfully
Polly Stephen
for Bertie Stephen

*Polly Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
5 February, 1917⁵⁶²*

Please Sir Would you kindly place before the Members of the Board my request asking for permission for my children & myself to go down to Lake Condah for a change as my children have been ill & only just come out of the Hospital[;] they had Bronchial Pneumonia & I myself have not been well. Trusting to have a favourable reply.

yours respectfully
Polly Stephen

Mr Ditchburn asked Mr Galbraith the manager at Lake Condah what he thought of the request. Galbraith replied that he did not think it was a good idea because there had been several cases of pneumonia on the station; also some of the children on the station had skin eruptions and there was one case of mumps. He then added: '[t]he Stephens family had a habit of coming here without permission until a few months ago. I have put Gilbert Stephens off the station several times[;] when you admit one others follow. I do not think outside natives should be allowed here unless destitute.' Mr Ditchburn replied to Polly Stephen that her request could not be granted for the present owing to the children being infected with pneumonia.

In 1919 Polly and her family were living at Dartmoor with her mother-in-law, Emily Stephen.

Polly Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 3 July, 1919⁵⁶³

Dear Sir

Would you kindly alter my order for supplies from J Thompson Iron Store Gray St Hamilton to Mr A. H. Wapling Store Dartmoor[.] I am very thankful for your help indeed as times are very hard & the Winter is so severe[;] after Bertie is known here we may do better[;] trusting to hear a favourable reply

I remain yours
respectfully
Polly Stephen

Polly died the following month after suffering from pneumonia.

Janet Turner

*Janet Turner, Lindenow South, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
28 December, 1912⁵⁶⁴*

Sir

I the undersigned Mrs Turner, have received a letter from Mrs Stahle stating that she wrote to you to forward rations to Lindenow but as yet have received none[;] would be very pleased if you could send them as soon as possible as I am in need of them[;] hoping you will oblige

I am
yours faithfully
Janet Turner

Alice Clarke

*Alice Clarke, Purnim, to John Murray, Chief Secretary,
22 January, 1913⁵⁶⁵*

Dear Sir

I am sending you a few lines to ask if you would kindly grant my son John Murray a pass to go to Mildura Fruit Picking[;] he made a start working on the thrashing machine & I am sorry to say that he cant stand it as his lungs are not strong[;] he was home last Saturday[;] he looked very bad[;] he said that he has been spitting up blood since he started work with the michine[;] he would like the fruite picking & asked me to write to you for him[.] I would be glad if you could grant him a pass

I am
Dear Sir
yours respectuly
Alice Clarke

*Alice Clarke, Warrnambool, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
20 February, 1919⁵⁶⁶*

Dear Sir

In reference to my application re old age pension, I have received no word as yet about it. As I intend to leave Warrnambool shortly, I would like to hear something definite[.] Would you be kind enough to make enquiries about it. hoping I am not putting you to to much trouble

I am
yours truly
Alice Clarke

Esther McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Antwerp, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
21 February, 1913⁵⁶⁷*

Dear Sir

would you kindly send me a order for Dr Gawn of Jeparit[;] only one visit[.] I was on a visit here for a few weeks when I took bad and so I went to Jeparit to see Dr Gawn[;] as it was handy for me to go by train in the morning and back by evening and then after few weeks I met with an accident[.] I got thrown out of a gig and got one of my ribs broken & Dr Ingam came out to fix me and next day I went to Horsham Hospital[.] I will be going home in couple of days more to Goyura and you can kindly send the order's to the Doctors[;] one to Dr Gawn and one to Dr Ingam of Dimboola[.] Kindly oblige

your most humble

servant

Mrs McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
March, 1913⁵⁶⁸*

Dear Sir

i am writing you this few lines, to let you know, that i am out of the Hospitable a fortnight[;] i was in antwerp a week[;] i got...rasons sent down to me every fortnight[.] Mrs Holland used to send my letter down to me and i used to send it back to Mr Ford and he would send my rasons to me. i am here 3 weeks on Tuesday and i have not got my order yet because i dont make no mistake about my orders. i got it every fortnight, but this time it is 3 weeks, & i have not got it yet. my nabours give me a little now & then. i cant depend on my soninlaw to keep me because they are stragglng themself. this is all for the present time[;] may god bless & keep you

from

Esther McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
April, 1913⁵⁶⁹*

Dear Sir

I must tell you I have been very ill and I went to see Dr Donald in Warracknabeal so I want you to pay that gentleman and I want you to shift my rashions back to Mr Anderson in Roseberry[;] it costs me 1 / every week to go to Hopetown and I cant pay that and I would like you to let me have a lb of butter every week as I am very short before the fortnight is up[.] I only get what little you send[.] I am too old now to work & since I got threw out of the Gij [jig] I am crippled up so I could

do with a little more food than you allow me as it is always finished before the fortnight is up[;] hoping you can let me have a little more

I remain

yours sincerely

Esther McGuiness

PS Do you think I could get the old age pension if I apply for it[;] kindly let me know

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
5 May, 1913⁵⁷⁰*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to let you know that I visit the doctor in Warrack[;] his name is Dr Donald. he send me to the chemist for the medical so I am sending you the bill.

your truly

Mrs E McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
7 August, 1913⁵⁷¹*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to let you know that Mr Anderson at Rosebery is serving me with butter. I am very sorry that I kept you waiting so long.

I ramine your

affectionate friend

Esther McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
23 August, 1913⁵⁷²*

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to let that I recived your kind and welcome letter the other day and you was asking me to have my dresses made here. I would like you to send them floss, because Ruby has a machine. And I want a bottle of Cleannotice. what you send me last time[.] So Hoping to hear from you at an early date

your affection

you can send

Esther McGuiness

light material

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
5 May, 1916⁵⁷³*

Dear Sir

just a few lines to let you know that we are all quite [well] and I got your letter[.] I want all my cloth what I used to get and I want you to send my cloth as I am ragget and cold because I never got my

summer dress[.] I am walking about bear feet. I got no one to work for me[.] May God bless you and keep you

I remaine yours friend

Esther McGuiness

Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,

10 June, 1916⁵⁷⁴

Dear Sir

I am going to Antwerp for a couple of month and I want you to send me a tent. see whether the chance of place will do me good. Send the tent to Antwerp[.] I only want a small one. My order will come here and the store keeper will send it to Antwerp and also my meat order. I am going to see my brother Mr Kinnear

yours truly

Esther McGuiness

Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,

4 July, 1916⁵⁷⁵

Dear Sir

Under Dr Donald's advice I ask you to be good enough to send me the necessary [?] & order to get a set of false teeth my health has been so bad Ive had to consult Dr Donald of this town who said my trouble comes from want of teeth & advised me to appeal to Gov. [?] you for an order to obtain them.

Hope you will give this your immediate & careful attention & [?] [?] the feelings of an old aboriginal woman who has resided in this district 40 years & brought up 15 children & friend children

I am

yours very sincerely

Esther McGuiness

Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs McGuiness, Goyura,

11 July, 1916⁵⁷⁶

Dear Mrs McGuiness,

With reference to your letter of the 4th instant, stating that Dr Donald had advised you to ask the Board to supply you with an order to obtain a set of artificial teeth, I am directed to state that the Board is not disposed to grant such a request.

Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,

25 August, 1916⁵⁷⁷

Dear Sir

I recived my parcel and also never recived my hat and dress meterial and cotton to sow my dress[;] you send me two towels[;] forfor stuff for peticottes and also colico. two pair of stockings boots and never

send my hat[;] do you expect me to go bair head. I also received my parcel which I thanks.

yours truly
Esther McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
6 September, 1916⁵⁷⁸*

Dear Sir

I got my dress material safe but no cotton to sow my dress and also never got my order yet[;] it is about 3 weeks. I never got my hat yet. Well Goodbye

May God bless you

I remain yours affectionely
Esther McGuiness

*Mrs McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
22 October, 1916⁵⁷⁹*

Dear Sir

I got 2 bottle of medicine from the chemist, Mr S. H. Mann when I went to see Dr Donold of Warracknabeal[;] only the 2 bottle I got of him[.] I came home and I took a bad turn and I went and saw the Bulah, Dr Morgan, and I got 1 bottle of medicine and a bottle of lemonmint of him, and asked you some time ago for a tent to sleep in as I want to go to Antwerp for the summer as I am trouble with heart failure[;] if you send the tent my orders can come to Goyura. all the same as Mr Anderson send the things to me and my Butcher

your oblige

Mrs Esther Mcgunisse

you never oblige me with a hat

God Bless you and keep you

*Mrs McGuinness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
13 November, 1916⁵⁸⁰*

Dear Sir

Just a line to let you know I never got my order for the last fortnight[.] I should have got it last saturday week but it is not here yet[;] kindly send at once as I am very short

E. McGinnis

*Mrs McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
20 November, 1916⁵⁸¹*

Dear Sir

I again write about my order[;] it is a month last saturday since I received any order[.] I should have two orders by now[;] will you

kindly let me know the reason[.] I have nothing to eat[;] only Joe my neighbour I would starve[;] hoping to hear from you at once
Esther McGuinnis

Several days later Mr Ditchburn sent Esther orders for rations and meat, and expressed his hope that her visit to the Wimmera had improved her health.

*Mrs McGuinness, Goyura, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
31 January, 1917⁵⁸²*

Dear Sir

I would like to know how is it that you dont sent my ration order[.] I did not get my ration order for about 3 weeks and I was expecting it every day[.] I would be much obliged to you if you would send it as soon as you can and kindly oblige

Yours Faithfully

Mrs MacGuiness

Esther McGuinness, Goyura, to Secretary, BPA, no date⁵⁸³

Dear Sir

Just a few lines to let you know that I got your letter this morning[.] I want a duck tent 6 8 and I would like you to forwarded by rail next week.

I remain yours affectionily friend

Esther McGuinness

Goyura

Secretary, BPA, to Mrs McGuinness, Goyura, 17 March, 1917⁵⁸⁴

Dear Mrs McGuinness,

A 6 8 Duck Tent has been ordered to-day from John Gair and should reach the Goyura Station in a day or two.

I shall be glad if you will sign the receipt for same when it arrives.

Yours faithfully

Secretary

*Esther McGuinness, Goyura, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
24 April, 1917⁵⁸⁵*

Mr Parker Sir

Just a few lines to ask you could now oblige me by sending me a tent as the Doctor of Beulah ordered me to sleep out of doors[.] I received one a few years ago from Mr Ditchburn but it is all in pieces and no further use for anything[;] so trusting you will oblige me this little favor as soon as conveniently[;] with best regards and may God bless you
yours obediently

Esther McGuinness

Mrs McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 5 May, 1917⁵⁸⁶

Dear Sir

I received your letter the other day asking what clothes I need[.] I am in need of some warm underclothes[,] towels[,] stockings[,] boots size 6 and a Hat[;] also Blanket.

I am

yours sincerely

Mrs McGuiness

May God bless you

*Esther McGuiness, Antwerp, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
6 June, 1917⁵⁸⁷*

Dear Sir

I got your letter and was very pleased to hear from you. I got the tent. The reason why I kept you so long I went to see my daughter in Antwerp. I am going back to Goyura. I am expecting my cloth as I am cold. did you send them yet. God bless you and keep you.

I am yours truly

Esther McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Antwerp, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
27 June, 1917⁵⁸⁸*

Dear Sir

I am here in Antwerp for a couple of day[.] I will be going home to Goyura next week[.] I got the tent for Martin[?] and Ill see Mr Anderson if he could still continue with my ration because I sooner Anderson to have it as it is near to my place and he brings my ration right to my door[.] I could get someone in Hopetown but its to far for me to walk as it is 5 miles accept the man would bring it up to my place[;] any how I will see about it when I go back to Goyura next week[;] some time ago Mr Anderson told me to write and ask the Board that if they could allow me little more ration then what Im getting[;] it would pay them better but this way it dont pay them at all[;] with best regards

your humble servant

Mrs E McGuiness

*Esther McGuiness, Goyura, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
15 October, 1917⁵⁸⁹*

Dear Mr Parker

I wrote to you a fortnight ago to ask you to send my orders to Mr Anderson storekeeper Rosebury and my meat order to Mr Gower Butcher Bulah. I am home again at Goyura so please send the orders up as soon as possible to Goyura[.] I did not know they sifted my orders to Antwerp[.] I was ill at the time till my daughter bring it to me that they

sifted it[;] send it soon after you get this letter[;] good bye and God
Bless you

I must close
Esther McGuinness

Louisa Carter

*Louisa Carter, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
31 March, 1913⁵⁹⁰*

Dear Sir

Would the Board grant myself & little Bessie permission to go for
a months holiday to Purnim. We both have been ill & would like to go
for a change. Please to give my request your favourable consideration.

I am yours obediently
Louisa Carter

The Board informed the manager of Lake Condah that no passes were
available as the vote for the current financial year had been exhausted.

In July 1920 Louisa was working for a Mrs A'Beckett near
Bunyip.

Louisa Carter, Bunyip, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 13 July, 1920⁵⁹¹

Dear Sir

Please would you kindly give me permission to go up to stay at
my sister at Coranderrk Station Mrs Russell. as I am not to well at
present[.] I have been to see the doctor & he said I must go for a rest[;]
my sister said she spoke to Mr Robarts & he said that he have no
objection of my going up to stay with her & have a rest. only I had to
get permission from you

trusting dear Sir
you will kindly give
me permission to stop on the station till I get
better as I am an outsider working for myself
I as I am yours
obedient servant
Louisa Carter

The Board replied that Mr Robarts did not think it expedient to grant
the request at present.

Maud Mullett

*Maud Mullett, Cunninghame, to Mr John Murray, Chief Secretary,
17 June, 1913⁵⁹²*

Sir

I am writing a few lines to you to ask your permission please. If you will kindly grant me permission to stay on Lake Tyers Mission now for in a fortnight or sooner[.] I am expecting to be laid up[;] my husband David Mullett is working three miles up the Lakes, and oftentimes it is very rough so that it is a bit of a trouble in coming down in the boat. So, with your permission please Sir. Captain Howe will allow me to stay at my sisters place Fanny Bulls[.] I dont ask for any rations as my husband will attend to that. Captain Howe allowed me with my last child[.] But since then permission has to be given from the Aboriginal Board. Hoping to receive a favourable reply from you - Sir

I remain

your obedient servant
Maud Mullett

Mr Ditchburn referred the matter to Mr Howe, who replied on 2 July that:

The Mulletts are always a nuisance about the place & I never encourage them to come here; they were the cause of the outbreak of discipline here last year; they have been about here for the past six months & during the whole of that time David & Jack Mullett have only done about four weeks work. I sympathise with the woman in her present condition, but should she be given permission to come here now it simply means that the whole lot of them would be hanging about the station begging rations, as I am quite sure that David Mullett is too lazy to work to supply his wife with rations, if he thinks there is any chance of obtaining them otherwise.

It is a great pity that there is no law to compel those strong able-bodied half castes to work & support their wives or else go to gaol.

The Board granted Maud permission to stay at Lake Tyers for one month only.

In early 1915 Maud's husband David lost the job he held on a farm at Tarrawarra.

*Mr Ditchburn, Secretary BPA, to Mr Robarts, manager, Coranderrk,
22 March, 1915⁵⁹³*

Memo,

Mrs Maud Mullett interviewed the Hon the Chief Secretary this afternoon and asked that she and her children be granted rations until her husband obtained work.

The Minister directed that rations be granted and the Mgr at Coranderrk be informed to supply

Mr Robarts informed the Secretary on 30 March 1915 that he had given the rations as requested. However he felt it his duty to report that David Mullett had made no effort to regain employment since he lost his job at Tarrawarra five weeks ago.

Later in 1915 David Mullett enlisted in the AIF.

Mr Robarts, manager, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA, 20 November, 1915

Now that Mullett is in the Military Service, he should be remitting his wife and family sufficient to maintain them without further aid. I would suggest that the rations be discontinued after the 30th inst.

Robarts' suggestion was approved by the Board. While David Mullett was on active service Maud and her children moved to Carlton where they lived with Pavvy King and his wife, and Alex Taylor.

In November 1918 Maud left Melbourne to live with her mother Emily Stephen in Hamilton.

Maud Mullett, Goldsmith St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 22 May, 1919⁵⁹⁴

Dear Sir

I have not been able to refund the money I borrowed for my ticket[.] I had a letter the day I called in reference to my allotment the military wrote me saying that if I returned to Hamilton and now this letter has come back. so Mr Harris the Secretary Hamilton Information Bureau, so he gave me a copy to send to you hoping you will try and help me to get it again as winter is coming in and work is not too plentiful[;] in the first place David never inlisted from the mission[;] we were out earning our living like white people and Sir we have troubled the Government for very little help and now I am over here[.] I had two letters from the military and still no further advanced[;] that was my keep while he is away. I have been out earning my living ever since I was 19 years of age. so please Sir if you can help me I will refund the money that I owe for the fare that I borrowed[;] hoping to have a favourable reply

I remain
respectfully yours

Maud Emily Mullett

P. S. I know for a fact that my husband will not go on to any mission to live when he returns. [I]f he wanted me on the mission he would have left me on it before he went away. When I came out of the hospital I had to work till I heard from the military. I thought the money I

received was his wages to keep me while he was away[.] I dont think it fair that they should keep my money from me[.] I am entitled to it. I hope Sir. I have to pay house rent and keep myself in clothes and food. I hope you will consider it Sir[.] I would like to have my home comfortable by the time he comes back[;] please sir help me to get it again

It seems the Board replied to Maud that the Defence Department had already decided to cancel her allotment and that there was nothing the Board could do to change the decision.

Christina Arden

In 1910 the Board decided that Christina Arden and her family should move from Framlingham to Lake Condah 'for their own good' as they would have better living conditions at Lake Condah. From 1914 to January 1916 James Arden wrote to the Board periodically for a renewal of his license to live on Lake Condah. In March 1916 he enlisted in the AIF and went into the Ballarat Camp. From then on Christina wrote asking for a renewal of their license.

*Christina Arden, Lake Condah, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
19 April, 1916³⁹⁵*

Dear Sir

I and my family beg to ask permission to reside on the Lake Condah Mission Station

I am yours
respectfully Christina Rachel Arden

In April 1916 Mr Galbraith wrote to the BPA asking whether, as Mrs Arden was now receiving money from the Defence Department, she should be able to have her license renewed and still receive rations. The Secretary informed him that those in receipt of money from the Defence Department could elect to remain on the station but that the money should be forwarded to the BPA office to be paid into revenue against the cost of their maintenance. Mr Galbraith informed the Secretary that Mrs Arden refused to hand over her military allotment and wanted to know whether she could stay on the station. The Secretary replied that Mrs Arden must pay for the rations she and her family had received since her husband's enlistment and that if she did not her family would have to leave the station. On 24 May, 1916 Christina and her children left Lake Condah to live at Dunmore. An order from the Board on 30 May, however, stipulated that the Ardens could receive rations as formerly and on 31 May the Secretary informed Mr Galbraith that the Chief Secretary desired Mrs Arden and family to be allowed to move back to their cottage on the station.

Emily Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
30 October, 1916⁵⁹⁶*

Dear Sir

Do you think the Board would grant me 3 months rations as at present I am not able to work & the Doctor told me it would be some time before I would be able to do anything as it was a slight stroke that I had which left me numb all the one side. Would you kindly place my request before the Members of the Board & use your influence on my behalf of which I am sure you will do, as you know I would not ask if I was able to work at all. I trust & hope that I will get better & be able to work again: one feels miserable when you cannot work & be independent. God knows I would not ask help if I really did not need it. Relying & trusting to your help with respects

I remain Dear Sir

yours respectfully

E. M. Stephen

The Board granted Emily's request.

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
4 November, 1916⁵⁹⁷*

Dear Sir

In reply to your letter of last evening, Would you kindly convey my thanks to the Members for their very kind consideration of my request & I also thank you very very much your influence on my behalf, you will never understand what your kindness means to me now in my great need. You have said that you always wish to be our friend & help when reasonable. And you have proved a friend to me in my great need. For which I will always remember.

Accept my gratitude kind wishes &
respects

yours respectfully

Emily M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
30 November, 1916⁵⁹⁸*

Dear Sir

Would you kindly let me know if I have to write to you every fortnight re rations: As I went to the Sergeant of Police & he said that he had not been notified & advised me to write to you for instructions regarding the fortnightly order. Because if you send the fortnightly order from Melbourne to me then I suppose I need not trouble the Sergeant or you.

You will kindly excuse me for troubling you[.] Would you please to reply

yours respectfully
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
5 December, 1916*⁵⁹⁹

Dear Sir

I received your letter with order Saturday Evening 2nd Inst & gave them to Mrs Mullane & I have received fortnightly my supplies thank you. The reason I wrote inquiring was: have I to write each fortnight or is there no need. Once more thanking you with kind wishes

yours respectfully
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
2 February, 1917*⁶⁰⁰

Dear Sir

I am now writing to you thanking you for the Board's & your kindness to me for the last 3 months: & am asking for assistance yet: as I am unable to go out to work. I went round to the Doctor to examine me & he said that I was unfit to work yet because if I was not careful I might get another attack[.] I asked him if he would write out a note that I could send in to you for you to place before the Members, that you could see that I am not imposing on your kindness (I only wish that I could go out working & not be so helpless)[.] So dear Sir would you kindly place my application before the members for further assistance. So dear Sir would you use your influence on my behalf & once again Thanking you very very much for all you have done for me

PS

ever respectfully

If my request is granted

E. M. Stephen

would you let me have

some Baking P. & Candles

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
7 May, 1917*⁶⁰¹

Dear Sir

In reply to your note regarding articles of clothing which I need mostly. I am in need of clothing very badly. These are what I need. A hat, dress, boots, stockings, chemise, nightgown & if also they would kindly let me have a blanket. Would you kindly thank the Members for me

I am respectfully yours
Emily Stephen

Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Secretary, BPA, 2 July, 1917⁶⁰²

Dear Sir

I received today the parcel & am now acknowledging it[.] Would you kindly thank the Board for me & accept the same yourself

yours respectfully

Emily M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
27 March, 1918⁶⁰³*

Dear Sir

I received your letter this morning & was surprised that the Members thought kindly of me & are granting me clothing for which I am very grateful indeed. The articles I mostly need, are, dress stuff also for a peticoat, flannel, calico, aprons & a blanket boots no 5. Really I was just wishing especially for a blanket & was wondering what I would do & your letter was surprise as though it was answer to my wish. Will you kindly express my thanks to the Members of the Board. with respects to yourself

Yrs gratefully

E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
30 March, 1918⁶⁰⁴*

Dear Sir

Kindly excuse me for writing again. I think I forgot to put in the list nightgowns & chemises. I may have, but I am so forgetful; so I thought I would write & let you know: because I thought that I forgot to mention about either those articles or calico for the making. Mr Parker I've had a lot of worry & trouble lately, my daughter & son-in-law whom I live with have both been really sick[;] in fact Corney is not quite better yet. he as not be able to work for the last 3 months & I have had to struggle to keep things going & it has been hard, but we hope that times will be a bit brighter later on. Once again you will kindly excuse me for troubling. you with kind respects

yrs respectfully

Emily M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
7 June, 1918⁶⁰⁵*

Dear Sir

In answer to your letter & parcel which I received, this morning I went down to the Railway Station & got the Parcel you sent, I also inquired if there was another parcel from the Penal Department for me[;] they said no none arrived yet. Will you kindly thank the members for tell them that I am very grateful indeed; it was very very

kind indeed their including me with the others to get supplies, to me it is a great deal: especially when I never wrote in for any help in the clothing line. Last year's supplies were a surprise also. Now dear Sir accept also my gratitude.

respectfully yours
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Clark St, Hamilton, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
2 July, 1918⁶⁰⁶*

Dear Sir

I received yesterday the parcel from Pentridge containing 1 -
Blanket - dress material 8 yards serge flannel gray 4 yards
white " 5 "

pair women's boots no 5

Please would you kindly thank the members for me & I thank you also

With respects

yours respectfully
E. M. Stephen

Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 19 June, 1919⁶⁰⁷

Dear Sir

Friday 6th Inst I received from Pentridge a letter with list of articles of clothing & blankets which was forwarded to me, & the following Staunday 14th I got parcel which came down by the evening train on Friday 13th[;] in the parcel was the list of articles sent on a tag which was a blanket-8 yds[,] brown drill-4yds[,] petticoating. 5yds flannel[;] pair of boots no 5. I sent back the 2 lists as there was a mistake[.] I never put my signature to the one. I thought I would write & let you know about the mistake. My son, wife & children have left Hamilton & are down here[;] came last Friday by evening train. Would you kindly let me know if the Board intend helping us, as we are anxious to know[;] please Sir if not then we will be satisfied; after Mr Cameron said that he would put it before the other members we have been waiting for a reply[;] so dear Sir you can understand that we are anxiously waiting a reply[.] Wishing to hear a favourable reply to my requests

yrs respectfully
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Dartmore, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
30 September, 1919⁶⁰⁸*

Dear Sir

In answer to your letter I received the parcel Wed 24th was sending away the Receipt Sat. 27th but was too late for the mail. The coat is just lovely, so warm & comfortable (& the colour I like) it will be so useful for travelling in cold weather[;] in fact it is doing duty at

present[;] yesterday my daughter took her husband to the Portland Hospital. The Friday I left Melbourne at the Hamilton platform Blanche her husband & Flora Stewart got in the train[.] Flora was returning home after taking Maria MacDuff to the Hospital & my daughter & her husband had come up to Hamilton that morning to see the Doctor as Corney was ill. the Doctor wanted him to go into the Hospital as he had a touch of Pleursy but he asked the Doctor for a bottle of medicine as he would rather go home, we tried to keep him in bed but he would not stay in bed[;] so instead of getting better he seemed to get worse[;] he has fallen away & it is worrying the poor fellow about his house not being finished[;] it is hard to know whether he'll get better or be well enough to work for some time. Bertie went away Sunday to try & get into a shed. About the children he still wishes them to go over to Clara Hunt[;] that is the reason he has gone out to try & make some money to carry them over[.] I told him that I was willing to take care of them but if he wishes her to have them well of course he is the father & can please himself whom he puts them in the care of[;] so while they are here I will have the care & charge of them[.] Would you kindly ask the members if they would kindly allow me rations, as having the baby & Mary to care for I am not able to go out working[;] trusting to hear a favourable reply to my request. I was awful after I got here[.] I really thought that I would have to see the Doctor[.] I felt quite run down but this week I feel better. Has it not been one trouble heaped upon another, I thought I would have rest but here is this[;] you may as well say three babies, because when Blanche comes back she will try & do some work & I have to care for three little ones. I will now draw to a close once again[;] excuse me for writing such a long letter but I thought I would let you know how we all were and thanking you very very much for the coat & trusting that you will be able to have a favourable reply to my request. with kind regards.

yours respectfully

E. M. Stephen

kindly excuse bad writing
an awful pen

*Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
16 November, 1919⁶⁰⁹*

Dear Sir

I received your order for rations last week but could not answer sooner as I had to Heywood to the court about the war pension & on to Portland to see my son in law who is in the Portland Hospital very ill indeed. he is not expected to live[;] the Dr gave him up[;] monday will be 3 weeks since he left here: if he had only gone into the hospital that day I returned instead of coming home he might have been better now, it is sad to think that he'll never get better. I feel so sorry for my daughter & the two little ones, ah well we have only to keep a brave heart. Bert's two girls are both well, he has a nasty cold. You asked me

the number of Mary's boots[.] I think no 10 for a child of 8 yrs. Do you think that the Board would send them some clothing as they are very badly off[.] when the mother died the little house & everything had to be burned down & the little children have a few things which friends have given us for them[;] would you kindly do what you can for them[;] also would you send the orders direct to J. Thomson[;] that would save delay. And again I am sending you a letter that I received from J. Thomson. They have never sent any thing to me & also have we to pay the freight this end[.] I thought that was paid or part of the contract[.] At present we cannot see about that cottage at the mission as Corney is so ill in the Hospital[.] Would you try & use your influence on the little girls behalf. With kind regards

yrs respectfully
E. M. Stephen

*Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
18 November, 1919⁶¹⁰*

Dear Sir

I should have written to you some time ago, but I could not settle my mind to any writing as have been through trouble again[;] 26th Oct my daughter's husband passed away having been in the Portland Hospital over a month[;] poor man he died of peritonitis, as I told you once before after I came back from Melbourne that I met him & his wife in Hamilton coming back from seeing the Doctor told him but he came home & got worse[;] he would not stay in bed & then he had to go to Portland to the Hospital[;] he had pleurisy & pneumonia & then peritonitis set in[;] poor lad he did waste away: he never seemed to have got better after the Influenza & caught a fresh cold. My daughter & I wish to stay on here if the Land's Department will let us stay on[.] Blanche has written & asked them if they would kindly transfer the License to her in her name but she has not heard yet from the Department[.] Bert is away shearing[;] will be away about another week or two. Mr Parker I am asking you to kindly do a little business for me if you do not mind. I got a paper from the Military about Gillie's money & there are a lot of questions & the numbers of brothers & sisters he has living & I am to get their consent for the claim of Gillie's money. Blanche's name is down on the list & I suppose I may have to get Maud's signature also & why I write asking you if I sent the papers to you do you think that you get it for me. you will see that Healesville is put for her, are the Mulletts still at Coranderrk[.] if so could you send the papers on to Mr Roberts & ask him to get her to sign[.] Mr MacLean put for Harry not known as he may be at L. Tyers & again he may have gone away for all we know as we get no letters from there or in fact from any of the Stations. would you kindly do that for me & ask Mr Roberts also. Mr MacLean said not known should have been for Maud also because I really do not know whether they are at Coranderrk or not. he told me to send the paper in & he said it might come back to

get Maud's & Bertie's signature, so you see sir I've written to you in the mean while. Fanny's whereabouts we do not know[;] only wish we did on account of Bert's two girls[;] she would have been such a help. I am sorry to trouble you but really I do not know anyone else who could[;] the advertisement was in the Age & Argus 12/11/19[.] I trust that you do not think me impertinent asking you do this little business for me[.] I will now draw to a close with kind respects

I remain yrs respectfully
E. M. Stephen

Mr Parker replied that if Emily would send the papers the Board would obtain the signatures and return them to the Defence Department on her behalf.

Emily Stephen, Dartmoor, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 28 July, 1920⁶¹¹

Dear Sir

I received your letter yesterday & thank you very much indeed for putting my request before the members asking for supplies of clothing for my daughter & her two children. You wished to know the number of her Boots "no 4" & of little Jim "no 6" for age 3 yrs[;] the little girl is 18 months old[.] I do not know the number that she would take. About Bertie & his girls his is disappointed in a way because he thought he could get there & settle down; now he'll be able to look out for a shed; as in about a month or so shearing will start. Dear Sir I am again interceding (on Bertie & his two girls account) asking you if you will kindly use your influence & place my request before the members for winter supplies for him & his girls. Mary is nine yrs old & takes is Boots "no 12" & Clara is only 15 months old[.] Bertie's no clothes is "no 5" & in Boots "no 8"[.] I trust that the members will give a sympathetic consideration to the request. Also ask if the 2 little girls could get rations. I would have asked for them some time back, but knowing that Bert had every intention of taking his little girls over to Gippsland that is the reason I never sent in an application for them[.] It will be a great kindness to them if the members grant food & clothing to them & at the same time they will be doing a great service to me as my daughter & myself have to provide them with everything. Bertie has never been away but helping us & he had to finish off the building[;] he had to work as we got the timber[;] it was rather awkward getting the timber from the mill. he has to put in the windows when they come[;] they have been ordered nearly 2 months ago & he has to put up the chimney in the kitchen as soon as he can get some one to cart the sand[;] lime was ordered 2 months ago & only came about a fortnight or so ago[.] Very slow going but when it is finished it will be very nice[;] he has made a very good job of the building[.] Why I tell you is you may say or the members why does he not provide for them[;] really he is not in a position to do so & when accommodation is available it will be the best if he can get on L. Tyers with his two little girls. You

will excuse me for writing such a long rigmarole but I thought it best to explain so that you may not think he wont work because he has had no chance[.] Trusting he will be able (as soon as the shearing starts) to help. Please to kindly ask Mr Callaway to give a kindly consideration to my request on my behalf[.] I will draw to a close[;] my respects to Mr Callaway & yourself

I remain yours respectfully
E. M. Stephen

Trusting to see you & Mr Callaway some day

Lizzie McRae

*Lizzie McRae, Coranderrk, to Mr Ditchburn, Secretary, BPA,
6 June, 1917⁶¹²*

Sirs

Just a line to ask if permission could be granted to me to stay here for a month holiday[;] trusting you will kindly oblige.

yours truly
Mrs Henry McRae

Lizzie's request was approved.

Mary Austin

Mary Austin, Purnim, to Secretary, BPA, August, 1917⁶¹³

Sir

in writing you these few lines to ask you if you could grant me the double bed I was useing hear at Condah. Please sir will you kindly write to the Manager Mr Gallbraith and let him know if I could have the bed stead

hopeing you will grant my request
I am your obedient servant
Mary Austin

Mary's request was refused by the Vice Chairman. Mr Galbraith noted that 'I am glad this has been refused. No end to the wants of natives.'

*Mary Austin, Purnim East, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
25 June, 1918⁶¹⁴*

Dear Sir

im writing you these few lines to ask you if you could kindly allow me with rations for me and my three children that is attending the school. Dear sir I would like a little help from the Board for three months as the roads are getting very bad now[;] we wont be able to sell any wood. the wood carters only come out in odd times. So Dear Sir this is the first

time I have asked the Board for help since I left Lake Condah Mission Station...

hopeing you will grant my request
from your obedient servant
Mrs M. E. Austin

*Mary Austin, Purnim East, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
19 June, 1919⁶¹⁵*

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines to ask you if you could grant me rations for me and three children for a while as the roads are very bad and the wood carts cannot come out to bye wood now and I wood like a little help with some rations[.] I would be very thankfull if the Board would grant me a little help please and I was very thankfull and pleased with the help they was giving us during our great trouble with the Dyphtheria[.] I must say the little girl I lost was a true little Christian and was very fond of going to sunday school[;] she was only 4 years old and she is a great loss & she was the pet in my home and the favorite in the sunday school by her teacher[;] so Dear Sir I will again thank the Board for the help they gave us a little while back[.] I will now close and hope that you will grant my request.

from you Obedient servant

Mrs Chris Austin

The Board approved rations to Mary Austin for three months.

Georgina Clark

Georgina Clark, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 6 February, 1918⁶¹⁶

Dear Sir

I hope that I am not asking to much. I am a Half Caste belonging to Lake Condah in my young days. My father's mother worked there for years. I am married. I have five children aged respectfully twelve, eleven, seven, six, & three years. We have only recently selected close on to three hundred acres of Bush Land for which we pay between seven & eight pounds a year, it is much cheaper for us to pay rent for Land than to rent a house in a township. we live about four miles from Lake Condah[;] three of my children attend school there. I am a respectable woman & my children are always held up by the matron at Lake Condah for cleanliness & good manners. My Husband has always supported me & family, but I regret to say my Husband in a time when life was hard has had to undergo a sentence for taking a Bullock of a farmer & selling it, being his wife I of course have never been able to believe he was guilty, but all the same he got nine months, he is to be in till May, while there he has been in the Gaol Hospital with chronic sciatica[;] he will be almost unable to earn a living now, as we

only have tents to live in. I ask you will you please be kind enough to grant me a two roomed cottage from Lake Condah[;] four are empty. I would be glad to have one occupied by Bessie Young who had consumption. I would scrub it well with plenty of phenyle. I would have it removed in pieces & bleach it in the sun. we are very poor[;] just a bare existence. I have asked the matron to speak for me. She advised me to write to you. it will be very miserable to have to pass another winter in tents[;] we have no money to buy a stick of timber. trusting to hear a favourable reply. I am

yours respectfully

Georgina Clark (formerly Winter)

My only two Brothers went to the Front
one died out there. the eldest.
my youngest brother left his military pay
to Mrs Harriet King

The Board asked Mr Galbraith for his opinion about Georgina's request. Mr Galbraith replied that while Georgina's husband was in the hospital the state was providing for their children. Their land was very poor and her husband never had any employment. Mr Galbraith complained that Georgina visited the Aborigines on the station too often and he had asked those on the station not to allow her in their houses. The Board thereupon refused Georgina's request.

Georgina Clark, Lake Condah, to Secretary, BPA, 10 June, 1919⁶¹⁷

Dear Sir

As Flora Stewart suffered so much with her chest (bronchial) always after washing, I have agreed to come to the old people cottage one a week, & wash for them all. 5 (five) persons if allowed one 1 full adult ration

8lb flour
2lb sugar
1lb rice
1lb oatmeal
1/4 lb tea
2 candles

I have been getting the following ration for washing and ironing for three (3)

8lb flour and soap to wash the clothes
2" sugar
2 candles

Georgina Clark

*Georgina Clark, Lake Condah, to Mr Graham, Police Constable, Heywood,
6 August, 1920⁶¹⁸*

Dear Sir

I am writing to ask you do you know, or if you will enquire for me, if I can buy the Building on the mission station known as the Buggy Shed, & about six or more sheets of iron left on the old pig sty, also the wood work out of the house, that Mrs Stevens was granted the iron of. I am a half caste born on the mission station. I have never received any assistance from the Board yet. the house I live in has no floor. the roof leaks in several places. it is also very cramped. as there is a lot of stuff lying idle at the station[.] I thought I might be able to get something at a reasonable price. trusting to receive a favourable reply shortly

I am yours respectfully
Mrs Georgina Clark

Constable Graham forwarded Georgina's letter to the Board with his recommendation that her request be granted as her family were living in very poor circumstances.

Agnes Carter

Agnes' nephew Robert Taylor served in the AIF during the First World War and she received his military allotment. In early 1918 the BPA requested that the Defence Department suspend Agnes' allotment because she was also receiving assistance from the Board. It appears that the Defence Department continued to pay Agnes her allotment and that the BPA stopped supplying her with rations and clothing.

Agnes Carter, Lake Condah, to Mr Collins, 1 June, 1918⁶¹⁹

Dear Sir

Received your letter today. I am getting no help in rations line. And I am dependent very much on the allotment money for support. Since I have been up to see you I have received no help. And I thank you very much for your help & kindness

I am
your Respectfully
(Mrs) Agnes Carter

Dear Sir

I want you to thank Mr Rodgers for his kind assistance for me
Agnes Carter

*Agnes Carter, Allandale, to Mr Campbell, MLA, BPA, 1 May, 1919*⁶²⁰

Dear Sir

On behalf of myself I am aware that you are on the Board of Protection of Aborigines, & I am writing to you about my ration supplies which I was getting when I left the Lake Condah Mission Station, & first let me explain to you sir, that when I left the Mission I was to have my Government supplies in rations & clothing, which was granted to me from the Aboriginal Board, & when the day came when I left the Mission, I was getting my rations from the Government, up till twelve month last January 1918 & from that time I have had to keep the best way to provide for myself; in fact sir I was given to understand that I would be kept on being a ward of the state, I being a old age (Halfcaste) came under the Act of Aborigines, I was to be kept by the Board all my life, I must also explain to you sir, that I am receiving a Military Allotment from a nephew of mine who went away to the (front) to fight for King & (Empire); I only recive out of that is £1- per week; & I cannot call that my own; I am only my nephew's trustee for his money which I am reciving just now; & out it my nephew has allowed me 10/- per week to live on, & the way food & stuff is one can not live on that pay; so I was instructed by the Police to seek your aid to help me in my affairs in regards of my rations & clothing from the Aboriginal Board; so I am asking you Mr Campbell to help in my affairs to get my rations & clothing granted to me sir please; which I can assure you I would be very much pleased to have my rations granted back to me again sir, so I hope Mr Campbell please sir, that you will kindly place this letter before the sitting of the Board; at the next meeting, trusting you will oblige me sir

I am

yrs obidently Mrs A Carter

As a result of Agnes' letter and Mr Campbell's inquiry into the matter the Board decided to reinstate her rations.

*Agnes Carter, Lake Condah, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 1919*⁶²¹

Dear Sir

I now write these few lines to thank you for your kindness in granting me my rations again.

As I was badly in need of them. Again thanking you

I am Sir

yours Respectfully

Agnes Carter

Harriet King

During the First World War Harriet received an allotment from the military pay of Theodore Winter. In January 1918 she was informed of a

decision by the Board that Aborigines receiving military allotments from soldiers in camp or at the front were no longer to receive rations.⁶²² In early 1918 the Board requested that the Department of Defence stop paying Harriet's military allotment.

*Harriet King, Lake Condah, to Mr Collins, Hamilton Information Bureau, 3 June, 1918*⁶²³

Dear Sir

I received your letter asking me to state what help I receive in the way of rations. I receive my rations from the aborigine's board[.] But nothing in the way of clothes so I am partly dependent on this allotment[.] I am very thankful to T Winter's kindness in leaving me the help of his money & I miss it now that its taken away from me as everything is very dear now.

Thanking you for your help

I remain
Sir yours Respectfully
Harriet King

Mr Collins wrote to Mr Rodgers, MLA, on Harriet's behalf, urging that her allotment be reinstated. On receiving correspondence from Mr Rodgers in late June the BPA decided that Harriet could continue to receive her allotment.

*Harriet King, Milltown, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 4 October, 1920*⁶²⁴

Dear Sir

I am writing to ask you if you would please ask the Board, if, they will be kind enough to supply me with clothing. I am very badly in need of some. I am very sorry indeed to have to bother you for clothes, but, as I am too old to work now, and, I have no way of getting any. I will indeed be very thankful to the Board if they will grant my request.

I remain
Dear Sir
Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

Constable Graham forwarded Mrs King's letter with his own note that he thought that her son should be able to provide her with clothing. Otherwise he would have no hesitation in recommending that her request be granted as she was very respectable and of great assistance to the Aborigines at Lake Condah.

*Harriet King, Milltown, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 4 October, 1920*⁶²⁵

Dear Mrs Bon

I am writing to ask you if you will again be kind enough to recommend to the Board that I should be allowed clothing for myself[.] I am very badly in need of some clothes. I am writing by the same mail to the Board to ask them for the clothing[.] I am sorry to have to bother them, but, I cannot see what else I am to do.

I hope dear Mrs Bon this letter will find you well. We unvailed our Honour Board at the Mission Church last week, when, the Rev Gair preached his farewell service. I am indeed sorry that he has left the District, and, hope and pray that his successor will carry on the work that he has begun.

Well, dear, Mrs Bon. I must close now, with very kindest regards to you from

Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

*Harriet King, Milltown, to Mr H. Campbell, BPA, 4 October, 1920*⁶²⁶

Dear Sir

I am writing to ask you if you will again be kind enough to give me your help. I would ask you dear Sir to recommend to the Board my request for clothing[.] I am writing to the Board by the same mail to ask them for clothing. I am very sorry indeed to have to bother them, but, as I am too old to work now I see no other way of getting any. I am the widow of the (late) Angus King and I will be very grateful indeed to you if you will give me what help you can

I remain

Dear Sir
Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

*Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, to Mrs King, Milltown, 14 October, 1920*⁶²⁷

Madam,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, asking that the Board supply you with clothing. In reply I have to inform you that from a report received it appears that your son, who is 22 years of age, is well able to keep himself and you.

Yours faithfully
Secretary

*Harriet King, Milltown, to Mrs Bon, BPA, n.d.*⁶²⁸

Dear Mrs Bon

I received your letter today and am answering it at once. We have only two mail days a week now so I didnt get your letter till today.

Thank you very much indeed dear Mrs Bon for your great kindness in trying to get the Board to grant me my clothes. I assure you dear Mrs Bon I would not of asked for them, only that I was so very badly in need of clothes. Before writing in I asked the Constable if he would give me any support and, he said write in straight away and I will recommend them for you, and, that is the way he gives his recommendation, by writing in and saying my son is well able to support me.

I could not tell you what he makes in a year, he only gets work now and again[.] We depend mostly on rabbiting. This is a very poor neighbourhood for work, and the black boy has not the same chance as the white. At present my son is away[.] He is not a bad son to his mother. he is not a drunkard. When he has money he always gives me some, but, work around here is not constant enough to keep us going comfortably, and, the prices of good at present are beyond bearing. The Board have not answered my letter as yet.

We were very sorry indeed to part with Mr Gair. his adress is Linton PO via Ballarat[.]

The dear old people are well at present and wish me to remember them to you. Granny White is able to walk about a little[.]

Thanking you dear Mrs Bon for your great kindness. I will close with kindest regards.

I remain
yours respectfully
Harriet King

Harriet King, South Condah, to Mr Callaway, BPA, 5 November, 1920⁶²⁹

Dear Sir

I write to ask you, if you would kindly favour me with your assistance to ask the Aboriginal Board, if, they will supply me with clothing. I wrote to them some time ago asking for clothes, they replied back and said it is reported that my son was able to support himself and me. Now, Dear Sir, I am sorry to be compelled to ask for this help as ever since his father (Angus King's) death, he has provided clothes and land rent, for me, and, although still willing to do so, is unable owing to the high cost of living. I do not like being a nuisance, but, at present, I am badly in need of clothes. Dress material and calico, for under clothing, so if you, Dear Sir can grant me any assistance, I will be very grateful indeed to you. Thanking you for past favours.

I remain, Sir
Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

*Harriet King, South Condah, to Mrs Bon, BPA, 5 November, 1920*⁶³⁰

Dear Mrs Bon

I received your letter and thank you very much for the advice. I am writing by the same mail to Mr Callaway asking him for his assistance, and, I pray to God for His help (Philippians 4th 6th verse) and I am just leaving it all with Him for His promises are sure. If ye ask I will do what so ever ye ask in my name, so, the then definite blessing in prayer comes from our simple asking. I am pleased to be able to say all are well at present[.] Fran and Peter wish to be remembered to you and I hope Dear Mrs Bon this letter finds you well[;] with very kindest regards thanking you for all your help. I Remain

yours sincerely
Harriet King

The Board granted Harriet's request.

*Anne Bon, Member, BPA, to Mr Callaway, BPA, 14 November, 1920*⁶³¹

I am glad to learn from Mr Parker that the Board has granted Mrs King's request...I enclose two letters for you to read which show the simple faith of Harriet King in the Almighty God...You will also notice the duplicity of the Constable. I believe Harriet King to be a true Christian woman, and wish we had more at Tyers of her stamp.

*Harriet King, Milltown, to Mr Callaway, BPA, 28 November, 1920*⁶³²

Dear Sir

I am now writing to thank you for your very great kindness in getting the Aboriginal Board to give me clothing[.] I have just received the parcel from the local guardian, and I assure you, dear Sir, I feel very grateful to you indeed. Thanking you for past favours

I remain
Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

*Harriet King, Milltown, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
28 November, 1920*⁶³³

Dear Sir

I now write to thank you for your great kindness in granting me clothing. I have just received the parcel from the local guardian, and, I can assure you I am very grateful indeed for same[.] Thanking you for past favours.

I remain
Yours Respectfully
Harriet King

Norah Connolly

Norah Connolly's brother Richard King enlisted in the AIF but died in Ballarat in May 1916, before the embarkation of his unit. Norah received an allotment up until the time of his death and thereafter received a pension.

*Norah Connolly, Milltown, to Secretary, BPA, 6 July, 1918*⁶³⁴

Dear Sir

As the Condah Mission Station is breaking up, I am writing to ask if you would kindly grant me one of the houses[.] I also write to say that if it would please the Members of the Board to let the old people remain on a part of their old home, I would be willing to look after them[.] Trusting you will kindly consider my request

I beg to remain
yours respectfully
(Mrs) Norah Connolly

*Alick Bannam, Milltown, to Mr Campbell, MLA, BPA, 28 April, 1919*⁶³⁵

Dear Sir

I am writing to you on behalf of Mrs H Connolly half caste widow who has had her house burnt down last week to see if you could get one of the houses from the Mission Station granted to her for removal. I believe some of the other half castes have had houses granted to them and Mrs Connolly's is a very hard case having lost her husband through a gunshot accident and lost her brother R King at the war who was supporting her and she afterwards lost her adopted son H Winter also at the war so you will see hers is a very deserving case[;] trusting you will do your best to get her a home granted for removal. We will arrange to put the place up for her

I am
yours respectfully
Alick Bannam

The Board decided to grant Norah Connolly a house from the mission and also a double bed, dining room table, safe, and washstand.

*Norah Connolly, Lake Condah, to Chief Secretary, BPA,
29 August, 1919*⁶³⁶

Dear Sir

I have been informed that with your assistance Mrs Bon has been able to get my war pension renewed & I now write to thank you very much indeed for your kind assistance in doing so

yours very gratefully
N. Connolly

Ella Clarke

Ella Clarke and her family lived on a forest reservation near the Framlingham reserve.

*Ella Clarke, Warreenya Ford, to Mr Johnstone, local guardian,
August, 1918⁶³⁷*

Dear Sir

I am writing to see if you could please get me another months rations as the roads are in a worse state now than they were in the beginning of the winter. The carts are not able to come out for wood & the wood is the only thing doing just now[.] There is not other wood to be had. So hoping Dear Sir you will oblige. Fleetwood is cutting wood but not able to sell any at present.

Ella Clarke

Mr Johnstone forwarded Ella's letter to the BPA with his own recommendation that her family be granted rations.

Lena Austin

*Lena Austin, Purnim, to Constable Harvey, local guardian,
March, 1919⁶³⁸*

Dear Sir just writing you these few lines to let you know that my boy Arthur Austin did not get any suit of clothes as he always gets it every year and 2 pair of black socks[.] I dont no what size he takes but you can guess it by his age he is eleven years old and I want you to get me ready made Night dresses and chemises as I have got no sewing machine to sew my clothes on and I want my underclothing all ready made as it is our duty to let you no what we want as you are at the present time our local guardian and try and get a double bed for me and a single bed for my children[;] so try your very best dear sir as we are in need of these things[;] kindly oblige

yours truly

Lena Austin

Mrs Rawlings and the rest of them forget to tell you that we didnt get any towels[.] I always get four towels so send for the towels

*Lena Austin, Purnim, to Constable Harvey, local guardian,
November, 1919⁶³⁹*

Dear Sir I am just writing to tell you that I cant get any woman on the place to Nurse me[.] I have tried them all and I cant get not one and I am gone over my time so dear sir I am just writing into you to see what you can do for me[;] it is terrible thing when I cant get no one and I think that I will need a Doctor this time....kindly oblige me dear sir

yours sincerely

Lena Austin

Constable Harvey forwarded Lena's request to the Board. The Secretary replied that if a nurse was urgently needed Harvey could pay Jessie Alberts £1 to assist.

Jessie Carter

*Jessie Carter, Coranderrk, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
30 December, 1919⁶⁴⁰*

Dear Sir

I am writing just these few lines trusting that you will grant me a month or two stay on Coranderrk Station[.] I have just arrived here from Dunmore in the Western District where I stay with my mother Mrs Carter[;] a few months ago I had the influenza and was very ill and it as left me very weak – trusting dear sir that you will permit me to stay here for the time I have stated

I remain

yours faithfully

Jessie Carter

The Board approved Jessie's request[.]

Dorothy Pepper

In January 1920 Dorothy Pepper and her children moved from Lake Boga to a reserve at Lillimur where a number of other Aboriginal families were living.

*Mrs D. Pepper, Lillimur, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
31 March, 1920⁶⁴¹*

Sir

I am writing to you to see if the board could grant me rations for myself and three children[.] I have no one to support me as my husband died of the influenza and I am a widow[;] if they could grant me rations for a while you could let me know as early as possible by doing so

yours sincerely

Mrs D. Pepper

Lillimur

The Board referred the matter to the police in the Wimmera District. On 19 April 1920 Constable Potton reported that Mrs Pepper was living with her children in a small tent with few clothes and hardly any food. He thought that with the winter coming it would be best to provide the family with food and clothing. The Board decided to grant the family rations for three months. By 1922 Dorothy and her children were living at Lake Tyers.

Ada Austin

*Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mrs Bon, BPA, August, 1921*⁶⁴²

My dear Mrs Bon

Im just writing a line to you to ask you if you can do me a favour & has the weather is very cold & my house is very damp[;] we are hard up very much for blanket[;] they always give me one[;] my dear Mrs Bon I need to warm blankets if you can get them for me[;] my little kitchen is always very wet & miserable[;] there were mending the place last year & then its not done proply[;] if you was here now you would see for you self[.] I called at the Grand Hotel one day to see you when I was on my way home[;] a gentleman told me you was sick in bed[.] I left very much disappointed has I wanted to see you very particular[.] I left in June[.] I was glad to get home again[;] dear Mrs Bon I do hope & trust that you are keeping well in health[;] you are the only friend we all got[.] Im just letting you know that some of the young half caste people got blankets & we havent got ours yet[;] please dear Mrs Bon could you try & get me & Lenas & I need a good bedsick[.] I have none[;] my single bed is three quart[.] Lena cripple nearly to years now & very thin[;] shes always suffering[.] I got to dress stuff & one towel[;] I always get to[.] all of us didnt get our things proply[;] when I came home I went to the treasure building for pass but I have to pay for it back when I get the chance[;] but Mr Parker was very good & kind to me when I was down there[.] I heard you was comming down in the spring time[;] we will be very glad to see you[.] Lena & myself will like to see you personally if you come down[;] we got a nice little church now[;] the little organ is lovly[;] it has a great sound[;] my eldest nephew is the player in the chirch[;] my brother son he play by music[;] his name is Billie Austin[;] my dear Mrs Bon Ill now close with kindest love & best wishes[;] hoping to hear from you

yours old
friend Ada Austin

escuse my writing

*Ada Austin, Purnim, to Mr Bowden, 1925*⁶⁴³

Dear Mr Bowden

has I hadent no time to see you that day at the store when I was speaking to you about a axe I wanted to tell you if you could try you best to do me one favour specialy that Im in most need of[;] if you were out here you would see for you self I use to write to Mr C Thomas & he would never even bother you[;] see Im not very strong & I have no tank & Im getting up in years & not strong enough to cary my water in the summer time has it Sir a good mile to walk up to the [?] were water is & my old tank is done[;] its very old & it all leaks[.] I want a nice little tank like the one here Blair use[;] hoping you will try your very best for a tank for me & a small bed for my too [?] three quart bed[;]

they have no bed to sleep on & bed sicking for them[;] this is all at present

with respect
yrs truly
Ada Austin

Mrs R. Andrews

*Mrs R. Andrews, Antwerp, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA,
11 May, 1926⁶⁴⁴*

Dear Sir

just a few lines to let you know that I am writing to you for Government suport for myself as I got no one to keep me. my hubasne got killed about 5 month ago and I find it very hard only strugling along. So I thought I would write to you to see if you could keep me. kindly let me know. the storekeeper here is Mr W. H. Bond. and I will like meat. Mr Gebert the Butcher in Dimboola yours truly

Mrs R. Andrews

The Secretary replied to Mrs Andrews that she was not eligible for assistance from the Board under the Aborigines Act.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF THE LETTER WRITERS

Alberts, Jessie

Jessie Alberts⁶⁴⁵ was born about 1847, the daughter of Jim and Nellie Cain. She married John Brown, then Walter Lancaster, and later Henry Alberts. She lived at Framlingham where she died in 1933 at the age of 85.

Allen, Maggie

Maggie Allen⁶⁴⁶ was born at Coranderrk about 1879 to parents John and Lydia Briggs. Maggie married William Gilman in 1900. After William's death in 1911 Maggie married George Allen, and then after his death in 1913 she married Jack Gibbs in 1914. Her last husband, whom she married in the 1920s, was Alexander McRae. She was the half-sister of Lizzie Patterson. Maggie died at Lake Tyers in 1932.

Andrews, Mrs R.

We have been unable to uncover any biographical information on Mrs Andrews. However, it seems likely that she was the daughter of Esther McGuinness.

Arden, Christina

Christina Rachel Arden, daughter of Bessie⁶⁴⁷ and James Lancaster, was born about 1876. She married James Arden and their children were Christina Isabel Winters (died at 6 years), Herbert, Chrisadie Muriel, Sadie, Diana Maggie, Andrew Timmy Charles, Ellen Winters, and Lylal Josina Galbraith.

Austin, Ada

Ada Austin was born in 1876 to Albert (Pompey) Austin and Rosanna (Rosie) Francis. She was the sister of Chris and Lena Austin. She lived at Framlingham.

Austin, Lena

Ellen (Lena) Austin was born in 1878 to Albert (Pompey) Austin and Rosanna (Rosie) Francis. She was the sister of Ada and Chris Austin. She lived at Framlingham and had nine children: Maria Johanna,

Winnefred Adeline⁶⁴⁸, Arthur George Alex, Masie Rosey, William James, Christopher, Mary Maude, Francis Walter, and Nellie Rosey.

Austin, Mary

Mary Austin was born in 1879 to James and Bessie⁶⁴⁹ Lancaster. She was the sister of Christina Arden. She married Chris (Christello) Austin and their children were Adelaide Amelia Eileen, William John Wyselaskie, Ethel Emily, Harriet Cousins, Pompey Cyril, Stephen James Rawlings, Vera Rose, and Nellie Christabel.

Austin, Winnie

Winnefred (Winnie) Austin was born in 1904, the daughter of Lena Austin. In 1916 the BPA sent Winnie away from her family at Framlingham to Lake Condah station. The BPA kept her there against her mother's wishes until 1919.

Barkley, Sarah

Sarah Barkley⁶⁵⁰ (nee Briggs) was the daughter of Louisa and John Briggs. She married Allan Barkley in 1880. They lived at Coranderrk until 1883 when they moved to Ebenezer. They later returned to Coranderrk for a short period before moving to Maloga to be with other members of their family.

Barrett, Elsie

Elsie Barrett was born in 1897 to Elizabeth⁶⁵¹ and Henry Barrett. She lived at the Salvation Army Home in Brunswick from 1914 until 1921 when, following years of persistence from her mother, the Board allowed her to return to Lake Tyers. By January 1923 Elsie was seriously ill and died later that year.

Blair, Ellen

Ellen Blair (nee Foster) was born about 1867 to Charlie Foster and Nora White at Ramahyuck. She was the sister of Florence Moffatt. She married Sam Hamilton and then later Frank Blair after his wife Margaret's death. Ellen and Frank lived at Coranderrk for several years in the early 1900s, visiting Framlingham occasionally, until they moved to the Framlingham district in 1915.

Blair, Margaret

Margaret Blair (nee Robinson) was born around 1856 in Penola, South Australia. She married Frank Blair in 1873 and lived at Framlingham until her death in 1890. Her children were William James, Beatrice, Mary, and Lizzie.

Blair, Nellie

Nellie Blair⁶⁵² was born about 1904 and was from Wellington, NSW. She came to Victoria in 1911 with a missionary, Isabella Hetherington, who had adopted her. Nellie lived with Isabella at the small mission Isabella established at Bunyip, where other Aborigines stayed from time to time.

Brangey, Eda

Eda⁶⁵³ Brangey was born about 1860 in the Upper Murray area. Her father was Brangie, leader of the Oxley Flats people near Wangaratta, who died in 1882. Eda came to Coranderrk with several other children, including her sister Amelia, in April 1873. Her other sisters were Kate and Mary Ann. Later Eda moved to Maloga and in 1896 she married Edward Davis.

Briggs, Lydia

Lydia⁶⁵⁴ Briggs' first husband was Willie Edmond and in 1875 she came to Coranderrk from Wangaratta with her children Lilly, Willie, Lizzie⁶⁵⁵, Sarah, and Lucy. Soon after her arrival she gave birth to a sixth child, Murdoch, who died a few days after birth. Shortly afterwards Lydia married John Briggs (junior), the son of Louisa Briggs. Lydia and John moved to Maloga in the early 1880s and were the parents of William, John, George, Maggie, Caroline and Louisa. Lydia died giving birth to Louisa, in 1885.

Briggs, Louisa

Louisa Briggs (nee Strugnell) was born in 1836 on Preservation Island, Bass Strait. She married John Briggs⁶⁵⁶ and they came to Victoria in 1853 to go to the goldfields. They had nine children among whom were Henry, Eliza, John, Sarah⁶⁵⁷, William, Maggie, Mary (Polly), Caroline and Charlotte. Louisa came to Coranderrk in 1871. She lived there until the late 1870s when she moved to Ebenezer with her younger children. Louisa returned to Coranderrk in the 1880s, finally leaving in 1885 to live with her children at Maloga. In 1889 she moved to Cumeroogunga Reserve, NSW, where she died in 1925.⁶⁵⁸

Brindle, Emily

Emily Brindle (nee Peters) was one of several Aboriginal girls who came to Victoria from Albany, Western Australia, in 1867. Along with Bessy Cameron she went to live at Ramahyuck mission.⁶⁵⁹ She married John Ellis in 1868 with whom it appears she had one child, Emma Ruth. After her husband's death she married James Brindle, an Aborigine from NSW, in 1877. Emily and James' children were Mary, James and John. Emily's third husband was Edward McKinnon whom she married in 1884. Their children were Nora Agnes, Annie Louisa, Nellie Christine, Henry, and James Thomas. In 1892 at Byaduck Emily married Alex Taylor, her fourth and last husband. Their children were Mary Jessie, Emily, Alex John, William Robert, Wallace, and Bertha Grace.

Bryant, Maggie

Maggie Bryant (nee Cameron) was the daughter of Donald and Bessy Cameron. She married Tom Bryant (from NSW) and had the following children: Keith, Bessie, Tommy and Billy.

Cameron, Bessy

Bessy⁶⁶⁰ Cameron (nee Flower) was born in Albany, Western Australia, in 1851, and she grew up at Annesfield, a mission run by Anne Camfield. Bessy came to Victoria in 1867 with several other Aboriginal girls including Emily Brindle and went to live at Ramahyuck where she married Donald Cameron from Ebenezer in 1868. Their children were Boyd (died 1877), Maggie⁶⁶¹, Louise, Haines, Ada, Mina, Keith, and May. They lived mainly at Ramahyuck until the 1880s, but after that they lived at various missions, including Lake Tyers, and also away from the missions at Bairnsdale. Bessy died in 1895.

Campbell, Emma

Emma Campbell (nee Curr) married Alec Campbell and they lived at Coranderrk until the early 1880s when they left to live away from the station. It seems likely that Emma died soon after leaving Coranderrk.

Carter, Agnes

Agnes Carter was born about 1857. She married William Carter in 1878 at Lake Condah and was the mother of Alexander George, Louisa Jane⁶⁶², Walter Charles, William John, Frances Maude, David Leslie, Agnes Constance, Jessie Elizabeth⁶⁶³, Henry (Harry) Gerald, William John, Wallace Egan and Norman Auguste.

Carter, Jessie

Jessie Carter was born in 1896 at Lake Condah. She was the daughter of Agnes Carter and younger sister of Louisa Carter. In May 1920 she married Dan Russell at Coranderrk. Jessie died at Portland in 1938.

Carter, Louisa

Louisa Carter was born in 1882, the daughter of Agnes Carter. Louisa and her sister Jessie both lived at Coranderrk in the 1920s. Louisa had a daughter Jessie Elizabeth, known as Bessie.

Clark, Georgina

Georgina Clark (nee Winter) was born about 1882 at Lake Condah. Her father was George Winter. She married a white New Zealander named Clark and they had six children: Herbert Theodore, Dorothy Georgina (Dolly), May, Norris Connolly, Olive Annie, and Vi Ellen. She was the sister of Ellen⁶⁶⁴, George Herbert, Edgar Theodore (Theo) and two sisters who died in infancy.

Clarke, Alice

Alice Clarke was born at Mortlake about 1859. She spent her childhood at Lake Condah and Castlemaddie, coming to live at Framlingham at the age of 19. She married Frank Clarke and their children were Fleetwood Lawrence, Francis Norman, George Edward, Alice, Frank, Jessie, John and Elsie Maude. Alice died in May 1947.⁶⁶⁵

Clarke, Ella

Ellen (Ella) Clarke (nee Winter) was born about 1885. She married Fleetwood Clarke (son of Alice and Frank Clarke) in 1913. Their children were Theodore Thomas, Francis George Winter⁶⁶⁶, Ella Mary, Francis George Winter, Georgina Hope, Phyllis Norma, Herbert Edgar and Jessie Edith. Ella was the sister of Georgina Clark.

Connolly, Norah

Norah Victoria Connolly (nee King) was born at Mt Pleasant in 1880. She married Harry Connolly and lived at Lake Condah.

Crough, Lizzie

Lizzie Crough⁶⁶⁷ (nee Saunders) was born about 1870 in South Australia and was the daughter of Eliza Saunders. She married Joe Crough and

they lived on twenty acres of land on the BPA reserve at Elliminyt, near Colac. Lizzie had ten children: Minna Dora, Joseph Theodore, Kenneth, an unnamed child, Charles Cyril, Annie, Jessica Calvert, Alfred Bert, Jimmy and Blanche. Lizzie died at Colac in 1948 aged 77.

Darby, Elizabeth

Elizabeth Hewitt Darby (nee Carmichael) was born at Lake Condah in 1895. Her parents were Fred Carmichael and Sarah Ann Mullett. She married Frank Darby in 1916. Her children were Frederick James (Freddy), Clara Alexandra Josephine, Mary Ellen, and John Albert.

Dawson, Sarah

Sarah married John Dawson and their children were Rachel and Daniel. Following the death of John, Sarah married William Thorpe with whom she had several children: Frank, Alby, and Alice Ethel.

Dunolly, Jemima

Jemima Dunolly (nee Burns) was born about 1856 in the Echuca district. She came to Coranderrk as a girl, soon after the station was established in the mid-1860s. Jemima married Robert Wandin in 1875. Their children were Nina (died a baby), Robert, Ellen, Mary, Joseph, Frank, William, Jemima Jessie Shaw, James, and Martha Louisa. After her husband's death she married Tom Dunolly in January 1910.

Edwards, Eliza

Eliza Edwards (nee Coombs) was born about 1878 and married William Edwards in 1897. Their children were Cornelius (Con), Percy Phillip, Mabel Grace, Muriel Emily and Meta Comb. The Edwards lived at Ramahyuck and were the last family to leave the station after it closed in 1908. In 1910 the Board issued an Order-in-Council to force the Edwards to move to Lake Tyers.⁶⁶⁸

Edwards, Emily

Emily Edwards (nee Manifold) married Tommy Willis in 1876 and following his death she married George Edwards in 1882. She lived at Framlingham where she died in 1918.

Egan, Emily

Emily Egan was born about 1855 at Lake Condah. Her parents were John and Lucy Sutton. Emily married James Egan and their children

were Mary Maud, James Edmund, Robert Wallace, Amelia, William Alexander, John, Elizabeth Lucy, and Hilda Grace Victoria. Emily died at Lake Condah in 1893.

Foster, Rose

Rose Foster was born about 1881 to parents Catherine Chase (nee Wilson) and Thomas Johnson. She was the sister of Lizzie Jennings. Rose's first husband was Ted McLellan with whom she had two daughters: Kate and Rhoda. After Ted died Rose married Edward (Ted) Foster in 1905 at Coranderrk. With him Rose had more children: Grace Adeline, Andrew Johnson, Stanley Herbert, Angus Alfred, Nora Florence, Hugh Ernest Leslie, Rosanna Selina, William Lyle Galbraith, Edward Charles James and Charles Thomas.

Good, Ellen

Ellen Good (nee Egan) was born about 1856, the daughter of Mary Ann and William Egan. She was the sister of Lizzy, Jane, Amy, James and George. Ellen married William Good and they had a son Norman (who died in 1890 aged 10). Ellen lived at Framlingham until her death in November 1924.

Hall, Emily

Emily married Dan Hall at Coranderrk. They had several children who are buried at Coranderrk (to date we have not found any children that survived childhood). Around 1880, following Dan's death, Emily went to Maloga. There she married William McRae in 1883 and they had a son Stewart. Emily died in 1908 at Moama, New South Wales.

Harrison, Margaret

Margaret Harrison (nee Wallaby) was born at Heywood about 1853. Her first marriage was to Tommy Taylor and they had three daughters: Alice⁶⁶⁹, Edith⁶⁷⁰ and Julia. Margaret later married John Green with whom she had a son, Jacob. In June 1883 Margaret was married for a third time to Captain Harrison. She had more children with him: Annie⁶⁷¹ and Rubina. By 1893 Margaret was living at Coranderrk where she died in 1898.

Hood, Minna

Minna Hood was born in 1899 at Lake Tyers, the daughter of Colin and Ellen Hood. After her father died Minna was sent to the Oakleigh

Reformatory where she died on 30 June 1921. She was buried at Coranderrk.

Jennings, Lizzie

Lizzie (Elizabeth) Alexandra Jennings (nee Johnson) was born in the 1880s to parents Tommy Johnson and Catherine Wilson (later Catherine Chase). She was the sister of Rose Foster. Elizabeth married Henry Barrett with whom she had a daughter Elsie. After Henry died in 1901 she married Isaac Jennings. After Isaac's death she married Haines Cameron, in 1925.

Johnson, Kitty

Kitty Johnson (known also as Kitty of Cunninghame, Kitty Yowalie and Kitty Bull) was born about 1847 and belonged to the Brabuwoolooong tribe. She married Larry Johnson and was the mother of Samuel (died as a child), William, Ellen, Maria (died as a baby), Thomas, Ernest, Samuel (died aged one), Hugh (died aged three), Sarah and Alice (died aged one). Kitty died in 1924.

Johnson, Maggie

Maggie Johnson (nee McDougall) was born about 1877. She married William Johnson and their children were Robert, Ada Grace, Ernest (died aged two), Violet Sophia, William (died as a baby), Richard Harold (died aged two), Alison, Euphemia (died as a baby), Harry Herbert (died aged one), and Lorna Agnes (died aged nine).

Kennedy, Rose

Rose Kennedy (nee Courtwine) was born in 1860 at Ebenezer to parents James Courtwine and Lilian Sarah Clark. She married Richard Kennedy. She was the sister of Dan Courtwine. After Ebenezer mission closed she continued to live at Antwerp and then moved to the township of Dimboola where she died in 1931.

King, Harriet

Harriet was married to Angus King and lived at Lake Condah. She had two children. It seems Harriet was of white-African descent. In 1890 she and her family left Lake Condah and Angus took up a grazing lease for 43 acres adjoining the station. After Angus died Harriet continued to live on the property with her children until she died in 1938.

Lee, Bella

Isabella (Bella) Lee was born about 1866, the daughter of Maggie (Black Magg) and sister of Minnie. She attended Corryong State School during the 1870s. Bella and Minnie came to live at Coranderrk in 1878 after their mother died. There Bella married a Queensland Aboriginal black-tracker named Thomas Spider who came to live on the station in 1880. She bore a daughter Catherine in 1883; both she and her child died in 1885.

Login, Alice

Alice Login⁶⁷² (nee Taylor) was born about 1877 to parents Margaret⁶⁷³ and Tommy Taylor. She grew up at Ramahyuck mission and married Otto Login in 1893. Alice died in June 1949.

McCreddie, Agnes

Agnes McCreddie (nee Hall) was born about 1854. She married Donald McCreddie and their children were Charles Alfred, George, Walter Ernest, Christina Rebecca, Robina Florence and Frances Mabel.

McCreddie, Katherine

Katherine McCreddie (nee Scott) was born in 1876. She was the sister of Braggin, Thomas, Julia, and half-sister of Otto Login. Katherine married Walter McCreddie and they had a son Walter. Katherine died in November 1930 at Coranderrk.

McDonald, Annie

Annie McDonald⁶⁷⁴ (nee Rich) was born at Murat Station, South Australia (present-day Ceduna). She married Alfred McDonald. For a time they lived at Lake Condah but from the early 1890s onwards they mainly lived off the station, at Dunmore.

McDougall, Bella

Isabella (Bella) McDougall was born about 1882 to Eliza and Neddy O'Rourke. She married John McDougall about 1908 and their children were Mabel, Lancelot, Archibald, Allan and Kathleen. Bella later married Haines Cameron (Bessy Cameron's son) and their children were Lola and Ronald. Bella died at Orbost in 1947.

McGuiness, Esther

Esther McGuiness (nee Robinson) married Thomas Mark in 1867 and they had about 12 children. Following Thomas' death in 1889 Esther married Peter McGuiness and it seems Esther had several more children. Esther lived in the Goyura area, at times living at the Aborigines' settlement at Antwerp. She died at Goyura on 7 January 1918.

McLellan, Maggie

Maggie McLellan came to Coranderrk from the Kerang district soon after the station opened in the 1860s. Her mother belonged to the Loddon tribe and her father was a white squatter by the name of Campbell. Around 1861 she had a son Alfred Davis (his father is reputed to have been an Irishman). Maggie married Jemmy Barber and then following Jemmy's death she married Willie Buscombe. After his death she married Edward (Ned) McLellan in 1881 at Lake Hindmarsh (Ebenezer). She died in January 1907 and was buried at Coranderrk.

McRae, Lizzie

Lizzie McRae (nee Hamilton) was born around 1888. She married Henry McRae (son of Tommy McRae the artist) in 1909 at Coranderrk. They had several children who died in infancy. They lived at Coranderrk for a few years, and then from around 1917, lived at Isabella Hetherington's mission at Bunyip. In their later years Lizzie and Henry moved to Warrnambool where Lizzie died in 1936. Both Lizzie and Henry are buried in Warrnambool.

McRae, Mary

Mary Ellen McRae (nee Darby) was born in the mid-1880s in Gippsland and came with her parents Ellen (Looloo Looloo) and Albert Darby to live at Coranderrk. Mary married Alexander McRae (brother of Henry McRae) in 1907 and they had eight children: Isabel, Mary Angelene, Stewart Alexander (died as a baby), Jemima Ellen Lilian (Lilly), Sydney Henry James, Josephine May (died as an infant), David Hetherington, and Thomas Albert William (died aged 11). Mary died in 1920.

Manton, Annie

Annie Manton (nee Williams) was born about 1848, the daughter of an Aboriginal woman named Katy (Balmunnee) and a white overseer of Menzies Station. She was sister to Charlotte Simpson (later Arnott). Annie married James Rees and had several children who died young.

Previous to her marriage to James she had a daughter Mary Ann McLellan (who married Dick Rowan). Annie later married Lankey Manton and they had several children, among them Violet. Annie and Lankey lived at Coranderrk, although for several years they resided in the Murray River district. They were two of the few Coranderrk people who remained on the station after it closed. Annie refused to leave the station despite pressure from the BPA. She died in August 1934 aged 86.

Mobourne, Maggie

Maggie Mobourne (nee Turner) was born about 1873 at Lake Condah. She was married to Ernest Mobourne in 1893. Their children were William Robert, Arthur John, Ethel Margaret Tyers, Charles James, and Ernest Alfred.

Moffatt, Florence

Florence Moffatt was born about 1872 to parents Charlie and Nora Foster. She was the younger sister of Ellen Blair. Florence married Edward Moffatt in 1884 at Ramahyuck and their children were Alexander, Foster, Laurence, Sarah, Edgar, Eva, Magdelene, Adolph, Alexander, Hedrich, Thera, and Charles.

Morgan, Caroline

Caroline Morgan (nee Malcolm) was born about 1848 into the Loddon tribe. She came to Coranderrk as a young woman. There she married Johnny Ferguson and they had several children. Following the death of Johnny she married Alfred Morgan who came from the lower Goulburn River district. Alfred and Caroline had many children: Caleb, Emily (died aged eight), Dinah, Alfred and Louisa (twins), Malcolm (died aged 14) and Maria (died aged 18 months) (twins), Caroline, Martin (died aged nine) and Stuart.

Mullett, Kate

Kate Mullett was born about 1881 to parents Charles and Hannah Hammond. She married Thomas Johnson in 1898 with whom she had four children: Priscilla, Ida May, Thomas Campbell and Charles Frederick. She later married James Mullett in 1908 and their children were Dolly, Ellen Elizabeth, Edward (Teddy), James, William Joseph and Catherine.

Mullett, Maud

Maud Emily Mullett was born about 1881, the daughter of Emily and Harry Stephen. She married David Mullett and their children were Charlotte, Nellie and Rita.

Mullett, Violet

Violet Mullett was born in the mid-1890s, the daughter of Annie Manton. She married Alex Mullett in October 1910. Their children were Thomas Arthur, Dulcie, David, Dora, Agnes, Arthur and Annie. Violet died sometime between 1932 and 1934.

Murray, Alice

Alice Murray married William Murray in her latter years and lived in the Colac district. Alice had a sister Helen and was the mother of Pompey Austin (the first).

Murray, Susy

Susan (Susy) Murray was born about 1862 to James and Louisa Sutton. She married Frederick Murray from Adelaide and they lived at Framlingham where they reared several children. Later Susy and Frederick moved to Lake Tyers and eventually they lived off the station in Gippsland, at Lindenow South. Their children were Cecil (died in infancy), Herbert, Arthur, Winifred, William, Adeline, Ernest and Ethel. Susy died in 1914.

O'Rourke, Eliza

Eliza O'Rourke (nee Thorpe) was born in the mid-1850s. She was the sister of Billy Thorpe. Her first marriage was to James Perry and she gave birth to a daughter Martha around 1872. After James' death she married Neddy O'Rourke. Their children were Arthur, Edwin, Allan Gordon, Bella⁶⁷⁵, Norman and James William. Over the years Eliza became famous for her basket and bag making. She died in 1938.⁶⁷⁶

Patterson, Lizzie

Lizzie Patterson (nee Edmond) was born in the Wangaratta district, the daughter of Lydia Briggs and Willie Edmond. She was the sister of Maggie Allen. Lizzie married John Patterson (son of Emma Campbell) and their children were Lilian, Lydia, Henry (Banjo), Doris, Thelma (Emma) and Frank (Banjo).

Pepper, Dorothy

Dorothy Pepper was born at Antwerp around 1896 to Lilian and Captain Harrison Jnr. Dorothy married George Pepper. In January 1920, soon after George's death, she moved from Lake Boga to a reserve at Lillimur where a number of other Aboriginal families were living. Her children were Alice, Watson, Clifford, Louisa and Euphemia. She and her children moved to Lake Tyers in the early 1920s where she married Stewart Hood in 1923.

Pepper, Lucy

Lucy Pepper was born in April 1884 at Lake Tyers, the daughter of William and Lilian Thorpe. In 1903 she married Percy Pepper who later served in the First World War. Their children were Lucy Dora, William Phillip, Gwendoline, Alice Ethel, Sarah Lillian, Samuel Joseph, and Lena Mary. Lucy suffered from poor health, particularly lung trouble, and she frequently required hospital treatment. She died in 1923 at Koo-wee-rup.

Rawlings, Bessie

Bessie Mary Rawlings (nee Gorrie) was born at Lake Condah about 1850. She married James Lancaster at Condah before they moved to Framlingham to live. With James she had five children: George James, Walter Henry, an unnamed child, Christina Rachel⁶⁷⁷ and Mary Elizabeth⁶⁷⁸. After James' death Bessie married William Rawlings. Her children with William were William (died in the First World War), Diana and Isabella. Bessie died in June 1939 at Framlingham. The Warrnambool Returned Soldiers Association paid for her burial at the reserve cemetery.⁶⁷⁹

Richards, Ellen

Ellen Richards was born about 1848, the daughter of Mary (King Billy of Ballarat's wife) and a white man named Thomas Skidmore. She was the sister of Johnny Phillips. Ellen died in 1921.

Rose, Amelia

Amelia Rose was born about 1883 to parents Emily (nee Sutton) and James Egan. She had a brother John and a sister Lucy. She married Henry Rose in 1899 and their children were George, James, Hilda, John, Emily and Mary. Her brother William Egan died in the First World War.

Rowan, Jennie

Jennie Rowan belonged to the Lake Condah tribe. Her first husband was James Barker with whom she had many children. From what can be ascertained, all of these died as children. Following the death of James she married Sam Rowan, a widower. Jennie died at Coranderrk where she was buried in January 1910.

Russell, Julia

Julia Russell (nee Sutton) was born about 1872 in New South Wales. She married William Russell following the death of his wife Louisa.

Saunders, Eliza

Eliza was originally from Mt Gambier, South Australia. She married Henry Saunders and their children were Elizabeth⁶⁸⁰ and Chris (who served in the First World War). Eliza died in December 1918 at Dunmore.

Stephen, Emily

Emily Milton Stephen (nee Woods) was born around 1861 and spent her early years at Ramahyuck. She married Harry Stephen and had many children, some of whom died in infancy. Her children were Maud Emily⁶⁸¹, Hughie, Bertrand, Fanny, Frederick John, Alfred William, Ellen Rachel, Mary Blanche, and Gilbert Theodore. Emily took charge of the school children at Ramahyuck after the station school was closed down by the Education Department in 1901.⁶⁸² She and her family moved to Lake Tyers in 1905 where she lived until she was exiled to Lake Condah in October 1911. After 1914 Emily lived away from the mission stations. She died in December 1926 aged 65.

Stephen, Polly

Polly Stephen (nee Bull) married Bertie Stephen, Emily Stephen's son, in 1907 at Lake Tyers. They had several children before Polly's death in August 1919.

Stewart, Flora

Flora was born in the early 1860s at Lake Condah. She married Jackson Stewart.

Taylor, Edith

Edith Taylor was born in 1872 to Margaret⁶⁸³ and Tommy Taylor. She died at Lake Condah in April 1884.

Terrick, Ellen

Ellen (Looloo Looloo) Terrick married Albert Darby and they had a large family, but the only children who survived into adulthood were Mary Ellen⁶⁸⁴, Albert Carl, and Frank (who married Elizabeth Carmichael⁶⁸⁵). Ellen later married John Terrick and was often referred to as 'Honey'.

Turner, Janet

Janet (or Jeanette) Turner was born about 1858 in the Western District. She was the mother of Robert, Flora Jane, Louisa Catherine, Frances, John, Annie Rose, Harriet, William John, Donald and Maggie⁶⁸⁶.

Wandin, Fanny

Frances (Fanny) Amy Wandin was born in 1896, the daughter of Dinah⁶⁸⁷ and Edward McDougall. She married William Wandin, Jemima Dunolly's son, and their children were Joseph (Joshua), Robert and Kate. Fanny died in 1930.

Wyselaskie, Harriet

Harriet Wyselaskie was born about 1862. For most of her life she lived at Framlingham. Her first husband was James Couzens with whom she had a daughter Sarah. Further children were Esther, John and Nicholas. Later she married John Wyselaskie.

Young, Dinah

Dinah Young (nee Hunter) was born about 1871 at Coranderrk. Her parents were Louisa Shepherd and Peter Hunter. She married Edward McDougall in 1896 and their children were Frances Amy⁶⁸⁸, Joseph David, Louisa Ellen, and Richard Alexander. Her second husband was Albert White whom she married in 1905. With him she had more children: Clifford Neville, Edith Olive, Victor Albert, and Alice Florence. Later she married James Young after his wife Bessie died.

ENDNOTES

¹ Annie Alberts to Ronald Glenn, no date, National Archives of Australia (NAA), B337/1, individual case files, 2.

² For an extended version of this discussion see: Patricia Grimshaw and Elizabeth Nelson, 'Empire, "the Civilising Mission" and Indigenous Christian Women in Colonial Victoria', *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 16, no. 36, 2001, pp. 295-309. See also Patricia Grimshaw, 'Colonising Motherhood, Evangelical Social Reformers and Koorie Women in Victoria, Australia, 1880s to the early 1900s', *Women's History Review*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1999, pp. 329-46.

³ The missionaries and station managers during the period of this collection were: Coranderrk: John Green (1863-74), Rev. Heinrich Stähle (1875), Christian Ogilvie (1877), Hugh Halliday (1878), Rev. Strickland (1878-82), William Goodall (1882-5), Joseph Shaw (1885-1908), C. A. Robarts (1909-24); Ebenezer: Rev. Carl Kramer (1872-91, died 1891), Rev. Bogisch (1878-1902, died 1902); Framlingham: William Goodall (1869-82), Robert Thwaites (1882-5), William Goodall (1885-90); Lake Condah: Joseph Shaw (1872-5), Rev. Heinrich Stähle (1876-1912, died 1912), Captain Sydney Crawford (1912-16), Mr Galbraith (1916-18); Lake Tyers: Rev. John Bulmer (1861-1907), Captain R. W. Howe (1908-15), Mr Greene (1916-17), Bruce Ferguson (1918-24), George Baldwin (1925-8); Ramahyuck: Rev. Friedrich Hagenauer (1861-1909, died 1909).

⁴ For more information on the establishment and management of mission stations in Victoria see: M. Christie, *Aborigines in Colonial Victoria 1835-1886*, University of Sydney Press, Sydney, 1979; Aldo Massola, *Aboriginal Mission Stations in Victoria*, Hawthorn Press, Melbourne, 1970 and *Coranderrk: A History of the Aboriginal Station*, Lowden Publishing, Kilmore, Vic., 1975; Bain Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1989; D. B. Caldere and D. J. Goff, *Aboriginal Reserves & Missions in Victoria*, Department of Conservation & Environment, Melbourne, 1991; Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians: Black Responses to White Dominance 1788-1994*, 2nd Edition, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1994; Jan Critchett, *Our Land Till We Die: A History of Framlingham Aborigines*, Deakin

University Press, Warrnambool, Vic., 1992; Keith Cole, *The Lake Condah Aboriginal Mission*, Keith Cole Publications, Bendigo, Vic., 1984; Diane Barwick, 'Coranderrk and Cumeroogunga: Pioneers and Policy', in T. Scarlett Epstein and David H. Penny (eds), *Opportunity and Response: Case Studies in Economic Development*, C. Hurst, London, 1972; Phillip Pepper with Tess de Araugo, *The Kurnai of Gippsland*, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1985.

⁵ Studies of Pacific missions include: John Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars: Christian Origins in Oceania*, World Council of Churches in association with the Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva, c.1982; Niel Gunson, *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas, 1797-1860*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1978; David Hilliard, *God's Gentlemen: A History of the Melanesian Mission, 1849-1942*, Queensland University Press, St Lucia, Qld., 1978; Sione Latukefu, *Church and State in Tonga: The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1974; Diane Langmore, *Missionary Lives: Papua, 1874-1914*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1989; James A. Boutillier, Daniel T. Hughes and Sharon W. Tiffany (eds), *Mission, Church and Sect in Oceania*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1978.

⁶ Lawrence M. Rogers, *Te Wiremu: A Biography of Henry Williams*, Pegasus, Christchurch, 1973, dust jacket.

⁷ Annette Hamilton, 'Bond-slaves of Satan: Aboriginal Women and the Missionary Dilemma' in M. Jolly and M. Macintyre (eds), *Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1989; Tony Swain and Deborah Bird Rose (eds), *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions: Ethnographic and Historical Studies*, AASR, Bedford Park, S.A., 1988; John Harris, *One Blood: 200 Years of Aboriginal Encounter with Christianity: A Story of Hope*, Albatross Books, Sutherland, NSW, 1990; John Ferry, 'The Failure of the New South Wales Missions to the Aborigines Before 1845', *Aboriginal History*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1979, pp. 25-36.

⁸ See Niel Gunson (ed.), *Australian Reminiscences and Papers of L. E. Threlkeld, Missionary to the Aborigines, 1824-1859*, AIAS, Canberra, 1974.

⁹ *Report of the Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements) with the Minutes of Evidence, Parliamentary Papers, 1837, VII, p. 76*; Andrew Porter (ed.) *The Oxford History of the British Empire, vol. III: The Nineteenth Century*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999. See also Zöe Laidlaw, 'Integrating Metropolitan, Colonial and Imperial Histories: The Aborigines Select Committee of 1835-37' in Tracey Banivanua-Mar and Julie Evans (eds), *Writing Colonial History*, RMIT Publishers, Melbourne, 2002. For humanitarians in the Australian colonies see: Henry Reynolds, *This Whispering in Our Hearts*, Penguin, Melbourne, 1999.

¹⁰ For the early settlement of Port Phillip see: Christie, *Aborigines in Colonial Victoria*; Jan Critchett, *A 'Distant Field of Murder': Western District Frontiers, 1834-1848*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1990; Marie Hansen Fels, *Good Men and True: The Aboriginal Police of the Port Phillip District 1837-1853*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1988; Margaret Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria, 1834-1890*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1961.

¹¹ *Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council to Inquire into the Condition of the Natives, Victorian Parliamentary Papers (VPP), 1858-1859.*

¹² John Chesterman and Brian Galligan, *Citizens Without Rights: Aborigines and Australian Citizenship*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 16.

¹³ Cited in Massola, *Aboriginal Mission Stations in Victoria*, p. 73.

¹⁴ *Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Annual Reports of the Church of England Mission of Victoria to the Aborigines, 1879 and 1880*, Mason, Firth and McCatcheon, Melbourne, 1879 and 1880.

¹⁵ Cited in Jennifer Martin, *Issues of Gender and the Aboriginal Women of South Eastern Victoria: A Study of Two Mission Stations, Lake Tyers and Lake Wellington 1860-1895*, B. A. Hons Thesis, Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1990, p. 18. Among historians of missions to the Aborigines in Victoria several have given particular attention to the lives of women. In 1974 Diane Barwick considered women's activism in her study of Coranderrk in the collection edited by Fay Gale, *Women's Role in Aboriginal Society*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra, 1978 and later in

an essay on Louisa Briggs of Coranderrk in Diane Barwick, Jeremy Beckett and Marie Reay (eds), *Metaphors of Interpretation: Essays in Honour of W. E. H. Stanner*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1985. Bain Attwood in his 1988 study *The Making of the Aborigines* wrote of the Ramahyuck teacher Bessy Cameron, and Jan Critchett has written of Framlingham Aboriginal women in *Untold Stories: Memories and Lives of Victorian Kooris*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1998.

¹⁶ Bulmer Papers, Box 11, Paper 11, p. 5, Museum of Victoria, cited in Martin, *Aboriginal Women of South-Eastern Victoria*, p. 24. For a study of first generation Aboriginal mission women and disputes over children, see Grimshaw, 'Colonising Motherhood'.

¹⁷ *Twenty-Fourth Report of the BPA, 1887/8, VPP, 1888*, vol. 3, no. 119.

¹⁸ Ron Vanderwell (ed.), *Victorian Aborigines: John Bulmer's Recollections 1855-1908*, compiled by Alastair Campbell, Museum of Victoria Occasional Papers: Anthropological and History Series, no. 1, Melbourne, 1994, p. 70.

¹⁹ *Report of the Aboriginal Mission Station, Ramahyuck, for the year 1875*.

²⁰ C. W. Kramer to Inspector of Aboriginal Stations, 6 December, 1876. NAA, B313/1, 92.

²¹ F. Hagenauer to Secretary, BPA, 24 August, 1897: NAA, B313/1, 173.

²² Chesterman and Galligan, *Citizens Without Rights*, pp. 25-6.

²³ *Thirty-Sixth Report of the BPA, 1899/1900, VPP, 1900*, vol. 3, no. 42, p. 6.

²⁴ See Bain Attwood on Bessy Cameron, in *The Making of the Aborigines*.

²⁵ We thank Kat Ellinghaus for providing us with the following references: NAA, B314 minutes of the BPA, 4, 6 June, 1888. A letter was received from the missionary J. H. Stähle stating that

some of the parents objected to their children being taken from them and sent out and that they intended to test the matter. That as a Missionary he viewed the policy of the Board with regret and considered the girls should be left on the stations until they obtained husbands. Mr Officer pointed out that in sending half castes out to earn their own living the Board was carrying out an Act of Parliament not its own policy. The Vice Chairman said the Board had no wish to be harsh or unduly interfere with

family ties, but that the Act had to be carried out. The Meeting was strongly of the opinion that intermarrying between blacks and half castes should be discouraged as much as possible.

Twenty-Fourth Report of the BPA, p. 8, appendix III, Stähle's report on Lake Condah as follows:

Now these girls have not undergone a change for the better to such a degree, nor have the circumstances under which they are to be hired out become so secure since then, as to enable them to resist temptations; on the contrary, the animal nature being in them, as among all savage races, predominant, they will become an easy prey, especially when they can see no prospect of being married to any of their own race; and while white men would ridicule the idea of getting married to an Aboriginal half caste, a good many unprincipled fellows would not be slow in accomplishing their ruin.

I would therefore earnestly request that all half-caste girls, and especially those of a darker colour of the mixed blood, may be allowed to remain on those stations where they are located, until the young men, who have to leave, and who have left the station already, have succeeded in making homes for themselves and can see their way to come and marry them; and if any of the girls should get married to full blacks, I beg to remark that, while we have no legal power to hinder them doing so, it will be a hundred times better to see them married to people of their own race and colour, than to force them out among whites, and thus exposed them to ruin.

The fact that the race is dying out fast, and that there are only a very few to marry, ought to make it all the more desirable to put no restriction upon them in this respect.

The blacks have conducted themselves satisfactorily as a whole, but have not worked with the same brightness and hopefulness on the station during the past year as they

did formerly, for I had always kept the prospect before them, which I believed I was justified in doing, that if they worked well, we could secure a station income, which would enable me to pay them regular wages, and that this station would always be a home for them and their children; but as it has since come about that we have to send in the money for wool and stock to the Board, and the children of these Aborigines are forced to leave the station by Act of Parliament, while the few remaining blacks are to be prevented from marrying after their own choice, they have lost all confidence, and are determined to leave the station and earn a living for themselves and their families in the best way they can, rather than part with their girls and have no prospect that they should be able to marry among their own people and settle down on the station, which they have always looked upon as their home. When one considers that grave doubts were entertained about the Aborigines ever settling down to a civilized life, and the trouble the missionaries had to train them to do so, it seems all the more deplorable that, after this has been successfully accomplished, they should ever be caused through any means to take again to a wandering life, with its consequent vices and hardships. I trust, however, that the Board may yet see their way to consider favourably these points referred to herein which are 'burning questions' without Aborigines, viz.: - The future of their girls, the intermarrying between blacks and the mixed blood, and the permanency of the home on which they have done no small amount of work, as the board well knows.

For fuller discussion see Katherine Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart: Marriages of White Women and Indigenous Men in North America and Australia, 1870s-1930s*, PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne, 2002.

²⁶ *Twenty-Fourth Report of the BPA.*

²⁷ See Pat Stretton and Christine Finnimore, 'Black Fellow Citizens: Aborigines and the Commonwealth Franchise', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 25, 1993, pp. 521-35; Chesterman and Galligan, *Citizens Without Rights*; Patricia Grimshaw, 'A White Woman's Suffrage', in Helen Irving (ed.), *A Woman's Constitution? Gender & History in the Australian Commonwealth*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1996, pp. 77-97.

²⁸ The archival sources for this collection are: National Archives of Australia (NAA), Victorian Office. CA 2013 Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines: B313/1 correspondence files; B314 minutes of meetings; B329 letterbooks; B337/1 individual case files; B356/0 Lake Tyers correspondence files, B2010 newspaper cuttings, 1882-1894. CA 2791 Lake Tyers Aboriginal Station: B354/0 Lake Tyers Managers' files relating to administration matters and record of personal details of Aborigines. Public Record Office Victoria (PROV). VA 515 Board for Protection of Aborigines: VPRS 1694/P0 correspondence files; VPRS 926 letterbook – Coranderrk, 1898-1924. VA 475 Chief Secretary's Department: VPRS 3991/P0 Chief Secretary's Department, inward registered correspondence II, VPRS 3992/P0 Chief Secretary's Department, inward registered correspondence III. State Library of Victoria (SLV): Bessie Flower, Letters, MS 12117, La Trobe Australian Manuscripts Collection. For invaluable information on the above archives see: Australian Archives and the Public Record Office of Victoria, *'My Heart is Breaking': A Joint Guide to Records about Aboriginal People in the Public Record Office of Victoria and the Australian Archives, Victorian Regional Office*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1993.

²⁹ NAA, B313/1, 189.

³⁰ NAA, B313/1, 189.

³¹ NAA, B313/1, 95.

³² NAA, B313/1, 207.

³³ PROV, VPRS 3991/P0, unit 1150, item R5123.

³⁴ NAA, B313/1, 26.

³⁵ NAA, B2010.

³⁶ NAA, B313/1, 27.

³⁷ NAA, B313/1, 121.

³⁸ NAA, B313/1, 121.

- ³⁹ NAA, B313/1, 121.
- ⁴⁰ NAA, B313/1, 122.
- ⁴¹ NAA, B313/1, 122.
- ⁴² PROV, VPRS 3992/P0, unit 406, item R4320.
- ⁴³ NAA, B313/1, 230.
- ⁴⁴ NAA, B313/1, 27.
- ⁴⁵ NAA, B313/1, 27.
- ⁴⁶ NAA, B313/1, 27.
- ⁴⁷ NAA, B329, 4, p. 21.
- ⁴⁸ NAA, B313/1, 230.
- ⁴⁹ NAA, B313/1, 215.
- ⁵⁰ NAA, B313/1, 57.
- ⁵¹ Critchett, *Our Land Till We Die*, p. 54.
- ⁵² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 1.
- ⁵³ NAA, B313/1, 129.
- ⁵⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁵⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁵⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁵⁷ NAA, B313/1, 124.
- ⁵⁸ John Sutton.
- ⁵⁹ NAA, B313/1, 217.
- ⁶⁰ NAA, B313/1, 101.
- ⁶¹ NAA, B313/1, 102.
- ⁶² NAA, B329, 5, p. 407.
- ⁶³ NAA, B329, 5, p. 929.
- ⁶⁴ NAA, B329, 6, p. 283.
- ⁶⁵ NAA, B329, 6, p. 377.
- ⁶⁶ NAA, B329, 6, p. 855.
- ⁶⁷ NAA, B329, 6, p. 874.
- ⁶⁸ NAA, B314, 4.
- ⁶⁹ NAA, B329, 5, p. 409.
- ⁷⁰ NAA, B329, 5, p. 422.
- ⁷¹ NAA, B329, 6, p. 4.
- ⁷² NAA, B329, 6, p. 11.
- ⁷³ Bessie's daughter Isabella.
- ⁷⁴ NAA, B329, 6, p. 326.

- ⁷⁵ NAA, B329, 6, p. 383.
- ⁷⁶ NAA, B329, 6, p. 428.
- ⁷⁷ NAA, B313/1, 129.
- ⁷⁸ NAA, B329, 6, p. 516.
- ⁷⁹ NAA, B329, 7, p. 106.
- ⁸⁰ Chritchett, *Our Land Till We Die*, p. 56.
- ⁸¹ NAA, B329, 7, p. 838.
- ⁸² NAA, B329, 7, p. 857.
- ⁸³ NAA, B329, 7, p. 879.
- ⁸⁴ NAA, B314, 4.
- ⁸⁵ NAA, B329, 7, p. 998.
- ⁸⁶ PROV, VPRS 3992/P0, unit 944, item T700.
- ⁸⁷ Pepper and De Araugo, *The Kurnai of Gippsland*, p. 209.
- ⁸⁸ NAA, B329, 5, p. 543.
- ⁸⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ⁹⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ⁹¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁹² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ⁹³ NAA, B313/1, 172.
- ⁹⁴ Although Emily remarried twice after James Brindle's death she seems to have still frequently used the surname Brindle.
- ⁹⁵ NAA, B314, 4.
- ⁹⁶ NAA, B2010.
- ⁹⁷ NAA, B329, 6, p. 79.
- ⁹⁸ NAA, B329, 6, p. 136.
- ⁹⁹ NAA, B329, 6, p. 158.
- ¹⁰⁰ NAA, B329, 6, p. 180.
- ¹⁰¹ NAA, B329, 6, p. 273.
- ¹⁰² NAA, B329, 6, p. 696.
- ¹⁰³ NAA, B329, 6, p. 846.
- ¹⁰⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹⁰⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ¹⁰⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ¹⁰⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ¹⁰⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹⁰⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

- ¹¹⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹¹¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹¹² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹¹³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹¹⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹¹⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹¹⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹¹⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ¹¹⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ¹¹⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ¹²⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹²¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ¹²² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ¹²³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ¹²⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ¹²⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ¹²⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ¹²⁷ PROV, VPRS 926, unit 1, p. 187.
- ¹²⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ¹²⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ¹³⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6. This letter was probably written sometime between March and August 1917.
- ¹³¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹³² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹³³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹³⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹³⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹³⁶ NAA, B356, 85.
- ¹³⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ¹³⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ¹³⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ¹⁴⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹⁴² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ¹⁴³ NAA, B337/1, 56.
- ¹⁴⁴ NAA, B337/1, 56.

- ¹⁴⁵ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁴⁶ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁴⁷ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁴⁸ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁴⁹ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵⁰ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵¹ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵² NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵³ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵⁴ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵⁵ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵⁶ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵⁷ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵⁸ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁵⁹ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶⁰ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶¹ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶² NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶³ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁶⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
¹⁶⁶ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶⁷ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶⁸ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁶⁹ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁷⁰ NAA, B337/1, 56.
¹⁷¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
¹⁷² NAA, B337/1, 407.
¹⁷³ NAA, B313/1, 138.
¹⁷⁴ NAA, B313/1, 138.
¹⁷⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
¹⁷⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
¹⁷⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
¹⁷⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁷⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁸⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

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- ¹⁸¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁸² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁸³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁸⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁸⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁸⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
¹⁸⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
¹⁸⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
¹⁸⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
¹⁹⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
¹⁹¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
¹⁹² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
¹⁹³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
¹⁹⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
¹⁹⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
¹⁹⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
¹⁹⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
¹⁹⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
¹⁹⁹ Also see letters in this section written by Ada Austin, Lena Austin and Ellen Good.
²⁰⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
²⁰⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²⁰⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²¹⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²¹¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
²¹² NAA, B337/1, 253.
²¹³ NAA, B337/1, 253.
²¹⁴ NAA, B337/1, 253.
²¹⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

- ²¹⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ²¹⁷ NAA, B337/1, 253.
- ²¹⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ²¹⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ²²⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²²¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²²² NAA, B337/1, 253.
- ²²³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²²⁴ NAA, B337/1, 253.
- ²²⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²²⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²²⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8. Also see letters by Lena Austin and Winnie Austin.
- ²²⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²²⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²³⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²³¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²³² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²³³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²³⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²³⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²³⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²³⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ²³⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ²³⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁴⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ²⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ²⁴² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8. Also see letters by Ada Austin and Winnie Austin.
- ²⁴³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²⁴⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²⁴⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²⁴⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²⁴⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ²⁴⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²⁴⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

- ²⁵⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²⁵¹ NAA, B337/1, 56.
- ²⁵² See letters of Elizabeth Jennings.
- ²⁵³ NAA, B337/1, 56.
- ²⁵⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁵⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁵⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁵⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁵⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁵⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁶⁰ NAA, B313/1, 100.
- ²⁶¹ NAA, B313/1, 100.
- ²⁶² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ²⁶³ NAA, B329, 5, p. 348.
- ²⁶⁴ NAA, B329, 5, p. 889.
- ²⁶⁵ NAA, B329, 6, p. 475.
- ²⁶⁶ NAA, B329, 6, p. 496.
- ²⁶⁷ NAA, B329, 7, p. 726
- ²⁶⁸ PROV, VPRS 3992/P0, unit 692, item E11662.
- ²⁶⁹ Chritchett, *Our Land Till We Die*, p. 58.
- ²⁷⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ²⁷¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²⁷² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²⁷³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²⁷⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²⁷⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²⁷⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ²⁷⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ²⁷⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ²⁷⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ²⁸⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ²⁸¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ²⁸² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²⁸³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ²⁸⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.
- ²⁸⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

²⁸⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

²⁸⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

²⁸⁸ NAA, B313/1, 139.

²⁸⁹ NAA, B313/1, 63.

²⁹⁰ NAA, B313/1, 63.

²⁹¹ NAA, B313/1, 95.

²⁹² NAA, B313/1, 229.

²⁹³ NAA, B313/1, 192.

²⁹⁴ NAA, B313/1, 98.

²⁹⁵ NAA, B313/1, 98.

²⁹⁶ NAA, B313/1, 27.

²⁹⁷ NAA, B329, 4, p. 264.

²⁹⁸ NAA, B313/1, 173.

²⁹⁹ NAA, B313/1, 173.

³⁰⁰ NAA, B313/1, 173.

³⁰¹ NAA, B313/1, 173.

³⁰² NAA, B313/1, 177.

³⁰³ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³⁰⁴ NAA, B329, 3, p. 606.

³⁰⁵ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³⁰⁶ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³⁰⁷ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³⁰⁸ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³⁰⁹ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³¹⁰ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³¹¹ NAA, B313/1, 177.

³¹² NAA, B313/1, 99.

³¹³ NAA, B313/1, 99.

³¹⁴ NAA, B356, 10.

³¹⁵ NAA, B356, 10.

³¹⁶ NAA, B313/1, 178.

³¹⁷ NAA, B356, 10.

³¹⁸ NAA, B356, 10.

³¹⁹ NAA, B356, 10.

³²⁰ NAA, B356, 10.

³²¹ NAA, B356, 10A.

³²² NAA, B356, 10A.

³²³ NAA, B356, 10A.

³²⁴ NAA, B356, 10A.

³²⁵ NAA, B314, 4.

³²⁶ NAA, B329, 6, p. 415.

³²⁷ NAA, B313/1, 57.

³²⁸ NAA, B313/1, 230.

³²⁹ NAA, B313/1, 129.

³³⁰ PROV, VPRS 3992, unit 640, items D9534 and C9555. Also see letter by Emily Stephen dated 11 November, 1896.

³³¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³³² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³³³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.

³³⁴ Edwin O'Rourke.

³³⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³³⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³³⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³³⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³³⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁴² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁴⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.

³⁴⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁵⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁵¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁵² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

³⁵³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁵⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁵⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁵⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³⁵⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³⁵⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁵⁹ Miss Murray was the sister of John Murray, MLA for Warrnambool, 1884-1916. In April 1913 he was the Chief Secretary of the State.

³⁶⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁶¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁶² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁶³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

³⁶⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁶⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

³⁶⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

³⁶⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁶⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

³⁶⁹ NAA, B337/1, 253.

³⁷⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.

³⁷¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

³⁷² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

³⁷³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

³⁷⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³⁷⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³⁷⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³⁷⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³⁷⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

³⁷⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

³⁸⁰ NAA, B337/1, 377.

³⁸¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.

³⁸² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.

³⁸³ Kate McLellan.

³⁸⁴ NAA, B337/1, 56.

³⁸⁵ The letters of Bessie (Bessy) Flower now held by the SLV were transcribed from the original letters in 1869. The transcriber inserted a blank for many of the names mentioned, including Bessy's own name.

³⁸⁶ Bessie Flower, Letters.

³⁸⁷ Bessie Flower, Letters.

³⁸⁸ Bessie Flower, Letters.

³⁸⁹ Bessie Flower, Letters.

³⁹⁰ Bessie Flower, Letters.

³⁹¹ Bessie Flower, Letters.

³⁹² NAA, B313/1, 97.

³⁹³ Minutes of Evidence, Royal Commission Inquiry into the Conditions and Management of Coranderrk Aboriginal Station, 1881, *VPP*, 1882, vol. 2, no. 5, pp. 68-9.

³⁹⁴ The files concerning the inquiry are contained in NAA, B313/1, 196.

³⁹⁵ Written statement of William Paton, 24 June, 1882.

³⁹⁶ *Argus*, 8 December, 1882: NAA, B2010.

³⁹⁷ NAA, B329, 6, p. 725.

³⁹⁸ Minutes of Evidence, Royal Commission Inquiry, 1881, p. 66-7.

³⁹⁹ NAA, B313/1, 210.

⁴⁰⁰ NAA, B313/1, 210.

⁴⁰¹ NAA, B313/1, 210.

⁴⁰² NAA, B313/1, 27.

⁴⁰³ NAA, B313/1, 207.

⁴⁰⁴ NAA, B313/1, 212.

⁴⁰⁵ The files relating to the complaints are contained in NAA, B313/1, 213.

⁴⁰⁶ Captain Page had been chastised by the BPA for referring to fellow Board member Mrs Bon in a disrespectful way in a letter to Jennie Rowan. Apparently Jennie had made known the contents of the letter to the Board.

⁴⁰⁷ NAA, B2010.

⁴⁰⁸ NAA, B2010.

⁴⁰⁹ Minutes of the BPA, 6 March 1889. The minutes did not specify the details of Jennie's complaint: NAA, B314, 4.

⁴¹⁰ NAA, B329, 5, p. 891.

⁴¹¹ NAA, B329, 6, p. 845.

⁴¹² PROV, VPRS 3992/P0, unit 640, item C9555. See Agnes McCreddie's letter dated 10 November, 1896.

⁴¹³ NAA, B337/1, 507.

⁴¹⁴ NAA, B337/1, 507.

⁴¹⁵ NAA, B337/1, 507.

⁴¹⁶ NAA, B337/1, 507.

⁴¹⁷ NAA, B337/1, 507.

- ⁴¹⁸ NAA, B337/1, 507.
- ⁴¹⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴²⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴²¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴²² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴²³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴²⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ⁴²⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴²⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴²⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ⁴²⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ⁴²⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ⁴³⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴³¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴³² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴³³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴³⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴³⁵ PROV, VPRS 926, unit 1, p. 145.
- ⁴³⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴³⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴³⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴³⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴⁴⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴⁴² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴⁴³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴⁴⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁴⁴⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ⁴⁴⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 9.
- ⁴⁴⁷ Nellie Blair.
- ⁴⁴⁸ NAA, B313/1, 95.
- ⁴⁴⁹ NAA, B313/1, 97.
- ⁴⁵⁰ NAA, B313/1, 98.
- ⁴⁵¹ NAA, B313/1, 98.
- ⁴⁵² NAA, B329, 5, p. 240.
- ⁴⁵³ NAA, B329, 5, p. 481.

- ⁴⁵⁴ NAA, B329, 7, p. 879.
- ⁴⁵⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ⁴⁵⁶ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
- ⁴⁵⁷ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ⁴⁵⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴⁵⁹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴⁶⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
- ⁴⁶¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ⁴⁶² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
- ⁴⁶³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
- ⁴⁶⁴ NAA, B329, 5, p. 538.
- ⁴⁶⁵ NAA, B314, 4.
- ⁴⁶⁶ NAA, B329, 5, p. 687.
- ⁴⁶⁷ NAA, B329, 5, p. 762.
- ⁴⁶⁸ NAA, B329, 5, p. 945.
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- ⁴⁸² NAA, B313/1, 61.
- ⁴⁸³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.
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- ⁴⁸⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ⁴⁸⁶ NAA, B314, 4.
- ⁴⁸⁷ NAA, B329, 6, p. 396.
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⁴⁹⁹ NAA, B313/1, 129.
⁵⁰⁰ NAA, B313/1, 130.
⁵⁰¹ NAA, B313/1, 130.
⁵⁰² NAA, B329, 6, p. 829.
⁵⁰³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
⁵⁰⁴ NAA, B329, 7, p. 168.
⁵⁰⁵ NAA, B337/1, 196.
⁵⁰⁶ NAA, B337/1, 196.
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⁵⁰⁸ NAA, B337/1, 196.
⁵⁰⁹ NAA, B337/1, 196.
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- ⁵²⁸ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 4.
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- ⁵³⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 2.
- ⁵³¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ⁵³² NAA, B337/1, 196.
- ⁵³³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
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- ⁵³⁵ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 12.
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- ⁵⁴⁰ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.
- ⁵⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁵⁴² PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5. Percy Pepper lost two fingers in an accident in 1897.
- ⁵⁴³ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
- ⁵⁴⁴ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.
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⁶⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.
⁶⁴² NAA, B337/1, 35.
⁶⁴³ NAA, B337/1, 35.
⁶⁴⁴ NAA, B337/1, 22.
⁶⁴⁵ Elsewhere spelt Albert.
⁶⁴⁶ Elsewhere spelt Allan.
⁶⁴⁷ See Bessie Rawlings.
⁶⁴⁸ See Winnie Austin.
⁶⁴⁹ See Bessie Rawlings.
⁶⁵⁰ Elsewhere spelt Barkly.
⁶⁵¹ See Lizzie Jennings.
⁶⁵² Variously referred to as Nellie Blair and Nellie Baird.
⁶⁵³ Elsewhere spelt Ada.
⁶⁵⁴ Elsewhere spelt Lidia.
⁶⁵⁵ See Lizzie Patterson.
⁶⁵⁶ John Briggs had two wives at Coranderrk: Ann (nee Munro) and Louisa (nee Strugnell). Before Ann died in 1884 there is some confusion as to whether references to 'Mrs Briggs' refer to Ann or Louisa.
⁶⁵⁷ See Sarah Barkley.
⁶⁵⁸ Heather Radi (ed.), *200 Australian Women. A Redress Anthology*, Women's Redress Press Inc, Broadway, NSW, 1988, pp. 34-5.
⁶⁵⁹ Emily travelled from Albany with Bessy Cameron. See letters of Bessy Cameron.
⁶⁶⁰ Elsewhere spelt Bessie.
⁶⁶¹ Maggie Bryant.
⁶⁶² See Louisa Carter.
⁶⁶³ See Jessie Carter.
⁶⁶⁴ See Ella Clarke.

⁶⁶⁵ NAA, B337/1, 137.

⁶⁶⁶ Two years after Frances died another son was born who was given the same name.

⁶⁶⁷ Elsewhere spelt Crowe.

⁶⁶⁸ Pepper and De Araugo, *The Kurnai of Gippsland*, pp. 233-4.

⁶⁶⁹ See Alice Login.

⁶⁷⁰ See Edith Taylor.

⁶⁷¹ Annie Harrison.

⁶⁷² Sometimes spelt Logan.

⁶⁷³ See Margaret Harrison.

⁶⁷⁴ Elsewhere spelt MacDonald.

⁶⁷⁵ See Bella McDougall.

⁶⁷⁶ Pepper and De Araugo, *The Kurnai of Gippsland*, p. 255.

⁶⁷⁷ See Christina Arden.

⁶⁷⁸ See Mary Austin.

⁶⁷⁹ NAA, B337/1, 631.

⁶⁸⁰ See Lizzie Crough.

⁶⁸¹ See Maud Mullett.

⁶⁸² Pepper and De Araugo, *The Kurnai of Gippsland*, p. 222.

⁶⁸³ See Margaret Harrison.

⁶⁸⁴ See Mary McRae.

⁶⁸⁵ See Elizabeth Darby.

⁶⁸⁶ See Maggie Mobourne.

⁶⁸⁷ See Dinah Young.

⁶⁸⁸ See Fanny Wandin.

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